Grant funding application still open for insular areas. PAGE 3
Man in crash died from a puncture wound to the heart. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

75¢

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXI, Issue No. 37

www.saipantribune.com | TUESDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2021 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

CPA mandates vaccination

IN HONOR OF MICHAEL NAPU KING ALDAN

The U.S. and CNMI flags at the Department of Public Safety are seen lowered to half-staff in compliance with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' directive to mark the passing of Tinian Municipal Council vice chair Michael Napu King Aldan. In addition to his duties with the 18th Tinian and Aguiguan Municipal council, Aldan was also a police officer at the Tinian Department of Public Safety.

NEIL FAMA

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

King-Hinds

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has officially adopted mandatory vaccination for all its employees.

Following a board meeting last Friday, CPA board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said the board officially voted to make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory for all its staff by March 1.

However, a CPA employee has raised various concerns, including the possibility of extending the deadline to get vaccinated, only mandating vaccination for employees who come in contact with passengers, and postponing mandatory vaccination until there is a vaccine that's al-

See CPA on Page 4

US coronavirus death toll nears 500K

By JOHN RABY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The U.S. stood Sunday at the brink of a once-unthinkable tally: 500,000 people lost to the coronavirus.

A year into the pandemic, the running total of lives lost was about 498,000—roughly the population of Kansas City, Missouri, and just shy of the size of Atlanta. The figure compiled by Johns Hopkins University surpasses the num-

See 500K on Page 4

CW visa holder disqualified from PUA

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A foreign worker with a CNMI-Only Transitional Worker immigration status is claiming that she received a disqualification notice just days after applying for Round 2 of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

According to the woman, who agreed to speak on condition of anonymity, she received a notice that she was disqualified and ineligible for PUA benefits, less than a week after applying for Round 2 of PUA and Fed-

See CW on Page 4

PSS online classes cancelled due to global technical glitch

Ada

By NEIL L. FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A technical glitch that affected the online learning system Blackboard Ultra worldwide resulted in the CNMI Public System cancelling its online classes yesterday, Feb. 22, with hopes that the issue would be

See PSS on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 8pm, Feb. 22, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,720	7	7,727
Recovered	7,528	26	7,554
Active	46	7	53
Deaths	130	0	130
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			122,982

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	143	0	143
Traced via Travel Screening	117	0	117
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			187

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 8,820	Dose 1: 373	Dose 1: 523
Dose 2: 6,402	Dose 2: 137	Dose 2: 170

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Now you can enjoy Cup BAB inside the air-conditioned comforts of BAB Korean Restaurant.
PAGE 11

ASIA
A call for a strike in Myanmar to protest the military's seizure of power is met with a threat.
PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
The mansion that John Travolta shared with his late wife, Kelly Preston, is up for sale.
PAGE 15

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (D-Saipan) talks during Friday's House of Representatives' session about a grievance letter apparently coming from an anonymous government worker who complained about an alleged unprofessional supervisor. Also in the photo are Reps. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan), and Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan).

Local

Lawmaker: Govt workers' grievance complaint must be taken seriously

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (D-Saipan) has notified the House of Representatives during their session Friday that she received a copy of a letter that day from a government employee who has a grievance complaint against his or her supervisor's for alleged unprofessionalism.

Babauta, who chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources, said that although the letter is unsigned and from someone who wants to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, grievances must be taken seriously.

"It's very disheartening to hear that in our service members and those who work for our government are experiencing toxic work environment and unhealthy and very abusive work places," she said at the session.

Babauta said she will be submitting the letter as an official communication to Speaker Edmund Villagomez's (Ind-Saipan) office so it can be shared and referred to the proper committee and they can address any grievances and follow-up with the proper department for action.

In a statement over the weekend, Babauta said she is disheartened to receive such disturbing news from a member of the government workforce.

Saipan Tribune learned that the letter was addressed to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and a copy was also sent to the Office of Personnel Management Office, Office of the Public Auditor, and to the offices of Villagomez, Babauta, Reps. Edwin Propst (D-Saipan), Christina Sablan (D-Saipan), and Celina Babauta (D-Saipan).

The complainant said it has been less than gratifying to be in such a toxic and hostile work environment.

"In these last several months, I have observed severe belittling, degrading, and disrespect of employees by a supervisor," the complainant said.

Babauta said that, instead of singling out any certain individual and/or government agency, she would like lawmakers to focus on the current procedures that Commonwealth has in place to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all employees.

"Are the policies adequate? What can be improved? Is there an outlet for employees? Is there support and training for our leaders? How can we support the Office of Personnel Management in this process?" said the lawmaker, adding that these are questions that will be addressed at the House committee level as they meet with proper agencies.

"We must do what we can to ensure these spaces are not toxic and abusive because we do not want these emotions and behaviors extending back into the home," Babauta said.

Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars every Thursday that run from 10am to 11:30am and are conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

March 2021 is Small Business Certification month at the Guam PTAC. Join us as we show you how to get one Small Business Administration's official, small business certifications!

■ Feb. 25 – PIEE: Do you have a DOD contract and need to get paid? The Guam PTAC will explain DOD invoicing procedures using the Wide-Area Workflow module in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment system.

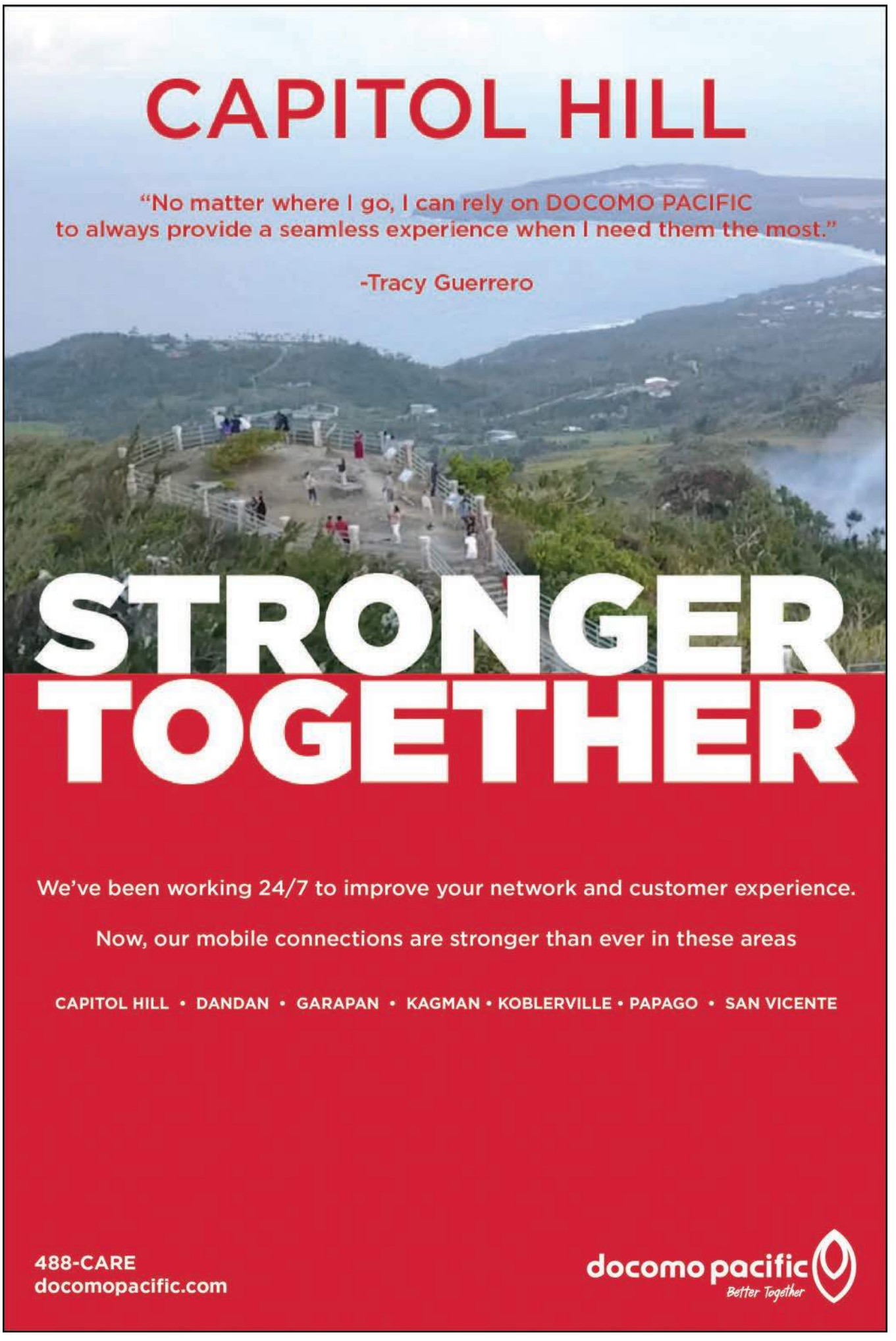
■ March 4 – How to get HUBZone Certified: All of Guam and the CNMI are HUBZones. The Guam PTAC will take you through the certification process, the required supporting documents, and follow-up requirements from SBA.

■ March 11 – How to get 8(a) Certified: The SBA's 8(a) Program was created to help small, disadvantaged businesses compete in the federal procurement market. The Guam PTAC will help you guide you through the 8(a) requirements and online application.

■ March 18 – How to get Women-Owned Small Business Certified – WOSB is now an official SBA certification program. We will discuss eligibility requirements, supporting documents, and the new, online application.

■ March 25 – SBA Mentor-Protégé Program – The SBA's All Small Business Mentor-Protégé program is modeled after the 8(a) Mentor-Protégé Program. The Guam PTAC will update you on the eligibility requirements and how to apply.

Register on our website, http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php. ***(PR)***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Grant funding application still open for insular areas

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs continues to accept fiscal year 2021 grant applications for the Technical Assistance Program, the Maintenance Assistance Program, and the Coral Reef and Natural Resources Initiative through April 1, 2021.

"OIA will accept applications for the TAP, MAP, and Coral Reef and Natural Resources discretionary grant programs through April 1," said OIA director and acting assistant secretary of Insular and International Affairs Nikolao Pula. "We encourage all insular area governments and non-profit organizations who serve the insular areas and their populations to submit funding requests for consideration."

Applications for fiscal year 2021 TAP, MAP, and CRNR funding may be submitted by insular government entities, educational institutions, or nonprofit organizations whose grant proposals are in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and will directly benefit the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the CNMI, and the U.S. Virgin Islands or the freely associated states, which are the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau.

Limited funding of $9.8 million remains available to be awarded through Sept. 30, 2021, under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Public Law 116-136, for insular area governments and nonprofit organizations to prepare for, prevent, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any questions should be sent to OIA TAP director Charlene Leizear at Charlene_Leizear@ios.doi.gov.

Complete instructions on how to apply for these discretionary financial assistance programs as provided through the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs may be found at: www.grants.gov (search for CFDA number 15.875). ***(PR)***

CHAMBER OUTREACH

Joe Guerrero, third from right, who has just been elected president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce board of directors, recently met with Northern Marianas College interim president Frankie M. Eliptico and members of NMC's team to discuss the college's workforce development efforts, rebuilding activities, and other issues relevant to the private sector. NMC

NMTI to use $10.3M grant to build typhoon-proof building

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Biden administration cleared Thursday the release of $10.3 million in disaster recovery aid awarded to the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, an investment that may result to creation of 410 jobs, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP).

» Investment in training seen to create 410 jobs

In his e-kilili newsletter posted over the weekend, Sablan said the money is intended to build NMTI's new typhoon-proof building that will house classrooms and offices to support the trades program.

He underscored the need for the trades program as the CNMI continues the multi-year task of rebuilding from the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018.

He said the new Biden administration continued to clear the backlog of Marianas disaster recovery aid applications.

NMTI applied for funding to build a new training facility in September 2019, just a few months after the U.S. Congress made the money available in U.S. Public Law 116-20. However, Sablan said, the Economic Development Administration took no action "until now."

"[A total of] 410 jobs are forecast to be created as a result of this investment in training," he said.

Sablan said that, together with the recently announced grant to the Northern Marianas College, EDA is confirming his long-held belief that investing in education is key to the CNMI's economic future and one of the best ways for the Commonwealth to build back better.

Prior Service Trust Fund gets $739,500

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has allocated $739,500 in fiscal year 2021 funding for the Prior Service Trust Fund Administration, which distributes benefits to approximately 700 former employees of the post-World War II, U.S.-administered, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in the Western Pacific

"We are pleased to be able to provide these funds in support of the many elderly in the islands who still rely on these retirement funds for basic needs," said OIA director and acting assistant secretary for Insular and International Affairs Nik Pula. The Prior Service Trust Fund administers these funds in support of the United States' ongoing commitment."

Employee benefits provided through the Prior Service Trust Fund represent a responsibility assumed by the federal government following the dissolution of the TTPI in 1986. The program serves beneficiaries with five years or more of prior service. The four jurisdictions to emerge from the TTPI were the CNMI, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau. The CNMI is a U.S. territory. The latter three are independent sovereign Pacific Island nations who each share a unique relationship with the United States under a Compact of Free Association agreement. ***(PR)***

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Propst raises twin issues with cannabis, hemp

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One of the drawbacks in opening a cannabis business on Saipan is the requirement to have liability insurance, which no insurance company in the CNMI offers, according to Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan).

Speaking during Friday's House of Representatives session, Propst also raised concern about CNMI's 60% tax for bringing in hemp cigarettes.

The lawmaker asked the House Committee on Cannabis to look into the two issues that separate constituents have raised with him.

He said a constituent is trying to open up his cannabis business, and that one the hardships he is finding is that tone is required to have liability insurance for this business. That constituent checked all the insurance companies on the island, but there is no insurance company that will do this for cannabis, Propst said.

"This is something that I hope we and the members can address," he said.

As for the heavy tax on bringing in hemp cigarettes, Propst said it's being taxed just like cigarettes or tobacco, which is 60%.

"It's rather high for small businesses that are bringing this in. Hemp is not cannabis, it's not addictive. It really is a very mild substance. And it's used to treat anxiety, among other things," Propst said.

The lawmaker said that taxing hemp at the high 60% rate is not conducive in this tough economy. "And we want to see small businesses grow. Importing this and selling it is really not a bad thing. It's just like, it's agricultural and natural. It's hemp," he said.

Propst urged the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism, and Cannabis chair Rep. Denita Kaipat Yangetmai (D-Saipan) to address these issues. "I also welcome any comments on that," he added.

Dyncorp Int'l donates $500 to Ohala Foundation

Camp Tinian will be the housing facility for future military exercises on the island. Dyncorp is handling all the logistics management for the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion, better known as the Navy Seabees, on Tinian.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dyncorp International, which provides logistics services and mission readiness for the U.S. military and its allies, recently donated $500 to the Ohala Foundation on Tinian.

According to a foundation statement, the donation will go toward the efforts of providing meals, clothing, medical support, and training programs for the people of the Marianas.

"Support from community partners like Dyncorp International is critical right now. They're a fine example of corporate citizens and we thank them for their commitment in making a lasting impact in our community," said Phillip Mendiola-Long, chairman of the Ohala Foundation. "Our efforts and goals can go much farther whenever we receive assistance from companies such as Dyncorp International. Thank you to them and Mark Rozycki and his team for their help."

The Ohala Foundation has provided assistance to over 300 families that are facing food shortages and would like to thank those generous sponsors and the community for their support. The foundation is currently offering a raffle to assist those most in need and would like to invite the community to enter the raffle by visiting ohalafoundation.org. Interested donors can reach out to the foundation by visiting ohalafoundation.org or by calling (670) 433-2664. ***(PR)***

500K

From Page 1

ber of people who died in 2019 of chronic lower respiratory diseases, stroke, Alzheimer's, flu and pneumonia combined.

"It's nothing like we have ever been through in the last 102 years, since the 1918 influenza pandemic," the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, said on CNN's "State of the Union."

The U.S. virus death toll reached 400,000 on Jan. 19 in the waning hours in office for President Donald Trump, whose handling of the crisis was judged by public health experts to be a singular failure.

The first known deaths from the virus in the U.S. happened in early February 2020, both of them in Santa Clara County, California. It took four months to reach the first 100,000 dead. The toll hit 200,000 deaths in September and 300,000 in December. Then it took just over a month to go from 300,000 to 400,000 and about two months to climb from 400,000 to the brink of 500,000.

Joyce Willis of Las Vegas is among the countless Americans who lost family members during the pandemic. Her husband, Anthony Willis, died Dec. 28, followed by her mother-in-law in early January.

There were anxious calls from the ICU when her husband was hospitalized. She was unable to see him before he died because she, too, had the virus and could not visit.

"They are gone. Your loved one is gone, but you are still alive," Willis said. "It's like you still have to get up every morning. You have to take care of your kids and make a living. There is no way around it. You just have to move on."

Then came a nightmare scenario of caring for her father-in-law while dealing with grief, arranging funerals, paying bills, helping her children navigate online school and figuring out how to go back to work as an occupational therapist.

PSS

From Page 1

fixed today, Tuesday.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said in a telephone interview that PSS teachers encountered an issue with Blackboard Ultra, which PSS uses for its online classes, at 8am yesterday morning and, within an hour, it was discovered to be a global issue.

That forced PSS to cancel its online classes yesterday—also called synchronous classes—requiring PSS teachers to transition their classes to asynchronous instruction, which means students were given instructions and assignments that they could complete on their own for the day.

According to Ada, the students weren't penalized for attendance due to the complicated situation, although yesterday was still considered a school day. Teachers were instructed to email each of their students learning packets that they can then complete on their own time.

"We have been using [Blackboard Ultra] as our online learning system platform for 10 years now and this is the first time something like this has happened," Ada said. "We are now working on a contingency plan to prepare for next time, so that we can prevent any potential delay in our students' learning."

Ada stated that the "technical glitch" occurred at 8am and, after a brief call, Blackboard Ultra engineers are already working on fixing the issue and are aiming to resolve it by today, Feb. 23.

"Thank you to all parents for understanding and continuing to support your children's learning," said Ada.

One parent who spoke with *Saipan Tribune* said that she received one automated message early in the morning telling her about the technical issue and then another one informing her about the cancellation of online classes. PSS later issued a letter to all parents informing them of the matter.

CPA

From Page 1

ready available and approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that are being administered in the CNMI have "Emergency-Use" authorization from the FDA.

According to a written comment from a CPA employee who withheld their identity, CPA should provide ample time for CPA management to conduct an outreach for its employees and the March 1 deadline does not provide enough time for one.

"I would like to request the board extend the March 1 vaccination deadline for the first dosage to April 1 to ensure that CPA management conducts outreach to employees regarding the vaccinations and what would happen if an employee fails to get vaccinated by the deadline," the comment stated.

In addition, the employee stated that mandatory vaccination is a bit extreme when taking into consideration the little to no community transmission in the CNMI.

"Mandatory vaccination is an extreme measure when considering the local statistics on community-based infections. CPA staff, most if not all, do not come in contact with passengers. Mandating vaccinations to personnel who come in contact with passengers is fair, those who do not should be held to least restrictive measures," the employee said.

Lastly, the employee was concerned that the current vaccine available is not FDA-approved and proposes that vaccination of all employees be made mandatory once an FDA-approved vaccine is available.

"The vaccine is not FDA-approved, but rather authorized through the Emergency Authorization. I believe the vaccine at its current stage is not advantageous. With the CNMI community's statistics on community-based infections, is CPA able to postpone the vaccination mandate until an FDA approved vaccine exists?" asked the employee.

In a previous interview with King-Hinds, she said the only way at this point that CPA can protect its employees and the community "is if we drive home the importance" of getting everyone vaccinated.

"Our health is our wealth and CPA employees, whether they be first responders or administrative support, are at the front-line by virtue of their place of employment. Our airports and the seaports are first points of entry in the CNMI and, as we slowly open up those points of entries, we have a duty to ensure that all our employees are safe and protected," she said.

CW

From Page 1

eral Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and contrary to previous statements that CW workers are now eligible for this federal assistance.

"The company I work for shut down because of COVID-19. I don't understand why I was disqualified. I just received a message on my portal [yesterday] that I am not eligible, even though the CNMI Department of Labor said that CWs are now qualified for PUA," she said.

The woman said this is comparable to Disaster Unemployment Assistance when foreign workers were encouraged to apply but were later told they were not qualified.

"They keep on putting our hopes up, then telling us we're not actually qualified. We are suffering too. This is our home too. We give years of our life here and also pay taxes but even at least during hard times, they can't show even a little bit of consideration for us," she said.

She, along with other CW visa holders, had high hopes for the second round of PUA and FPUC assistance after CNMI DOL announced that CWs have officially been included on the list of qualified aliens for PUA.

A man, who has been furloughed since June 2020, said he is still hopeful that he will qualify for PUA because hope is the only thing he has left.

"All we can do is hope. What I want to put out there is that CWs don't even want the entire amount. Even a portion of what we could get is enough. We understand that U.S. citizens will always be top priority. But all we're begging for is enough to survive since we have been jobless for months," he said.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain clarifications from Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente about the specifics of CWs receiving PUA but she failed to respond despite numerous attempts.

DOL began accepting applications for PUA and FPUC last Feb. 16, 2021, and will continue to do so through March 13, 2021.

The PUA program provides temporary benefits to individuals whose employment or self-employment has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of COVID-19. The PUA program, through the Continued Assistance Act, provides eligible applicants in the CNMI with 11 weeks of unemployment benefits starting on Dec. 27, 2020, to March 13, 2021.

Man in crash died from a puncture wound to the heart

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The autopsy on the man who was killed following a fatal vehicle collision over two weeks ago has concluded that Raju Bhai died from a puncture wound to the heart as a result of the accident.

During a preliminary hearing for Eduardo Fabia, Department of Public Safety's Lt. Norris Kwon, who served as the lead investigator in the case, shared the results of the autopsy done by Dr. Philip Dauterman.

Kwon, who said he was present while the autopsy was being performed, said that Dauterman showed him and others present the part of the heart of the deceased that had a laceration.

Kwon also saw a large laceration on Bhai's forehead, a fractured right arm, and a fractured left leg.

Dauterman later found that the puncture wound to the heart also caused major internal bleeding and the loss of blood is ultimately what caused Bhai's death.

Kwon said Dauterman explained that the blunt force trauma to Bhai's chest as a result of the crash crushed Bhai's chest, fracturing his ribs and it was a fractured rib that punctured his heart.

In the autopsy report, Dauterman determined that blunt force trauma to the chest from the motor vehicle accident caused Bhai's death.

Following the hearing, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo found probable cause to try Fabia in court for four of five charges, including homicide by vehicle.

Fabia was present during the preliminary hearing, in the custody of the Department of Corrections.

Earlier this month, the Superior Court allowed Fabia's release after he posted 1% of his initial bail, which was $100,000.

During Fabia's bail hearing, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho granted his request to appoint his wife as his third-party custodian.

Camacho allowed DOC to release Fabia to his wife after she posted a $1,000 cash bail.

Fabia's original bail amount was set at $100,000. He had asked the court to lower that amount to $10,000 and allow him to post 10% of that, which is just $1,000. Camacho denied reducing Fabia's bail to $10,000 because of the severity of the case and because he is a flight risk but still allowed him to post a $1,000 bail, but kept the original bail at $100,00 and hold the $99,000 in abeyance.

Fabia was arrested last Feb. 5 for allegedly running a red traffic light at the Puerto Rico intersection while operation a garbage truck owned by Artman Environment Corp.

Calif. man illegally obtains $500K-plus COVID-19 jobless relief

LOS ANGELES—A San Dimas man has pleaded guilty to a federal criminal charge that he fraudulently obtained more than $500,000 in COVID-19-related unemployment benefits in the names of foreign nationals he falsely claimed were local real estate agents hit hard financially by the pandemic.

Bonifacio Jastilana Marinas, 50, pleaded guilty to a single-count criminal information charging him with mail fraud.

According to his plea agreement, from April 2020 to August 2020, Marinas took advantage of provisions in the CARES Act to file approximately 85 unemployment insurance claims with the California Employment Development Department that falsely asserted that the named claimants were self-employed real estate agents in Los Angeles County whose jobs had been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Marinas often listed his own real estate business—Vintage Realty & Finance Inc., located in West Covina—as the purported workplace of the named claimants.

In actuality, the named claimants resided on Saipan or the Philippines, were not registered as real estate agents in Los Angeles County, had no employment history in California, and were not eligible for the benefits Marinas claimed.

Marinas listed his own residence as the mailing address for each of the named claimants, the plea agreement states. As a result, the debit cards used to distribute the unemployment benefits were mailed to Marinas, who then used them to withdraw the fraudulently obtained funds. In his plea agreement, Marinas admitted that his scheme caused losses to EDD and the United States Treasury of at least $516,244.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act passed by Congress and signed into law in March 2020 helped provide unemployment insurance benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic to people who did not otherwise qualify, including business owners, self-employed workers, independent contractors, and those with a limited work history.

U.S. District Judge Fernando M. Olguin has scheduled a June 24 sentencing hearing, at which time Marinas will face a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison.

This matter was investigated by the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, IRS Criminal Investigation; the United States Postal Inspection Service, and the United States Secret Service. EDD Investigations provided substantial assistance.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ranee A. Katzenstein, Chief of the Major Frauds Section. ***(USDOJ)***

NORTHERN MARIANAS TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Organizational Meeting
Location: Governor's Conference Room
Date: Friday, February 26, 2021
Time: 2:00pm

AGENDA

I. **Call to Order**

II. **Roll call and Determination of Quorum**

III. **Consideration and Adoption of Agenda**

IV. **Public Comments**

V. **New Business**
   a. Transition Process

VI. **Adjournment**

Written comments on the agenda may be submitted to the Northern Marianas Technical Institute through the Office of the Governor (Attn: NMTI) or emailed to: cnmitechnicalinstitute@gmail.com on or before the meeting date. Oral testimony may be presented during the meeting on Friday, February 26, 2021

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IT&E

Power outage in Chalan Kiya on Thursday

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there will be a scheduled power service interruption on Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021, between the hours of 9am and 2pm for portions of Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road and Chalan Kiya.

From 9am to 9:30am (momentary outage)

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Momentary Outage on the Kiya 3 and 4 Circuits to open jumper to isolate the work area.

■ Project Location: Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road in Chalan Kiya

■ Power Service Areas Affected: Chalan Kiya and partials of Chalan Monsignor Guerrero

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: W-6

■ From 9am to 2pm

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Outage on the Kiya 3 and 4 Circuits

■ Project Location: Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road in Chalan Kiya

■ Power Service Areas Affected: Chalan Kiya and partials of Chalan Monsignor Guerrero (see attached map-areas with red tracing will be affected)

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: W-6

■ From 1:30pm to 2pm (momentary outage)

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Outage on the Kiya 3 and 4 Circuits to close jumper to re-energize utility lines.

■ Project Location: Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road in Chalan Kiya

■ Power Service Areas Affected: Chalan Kiya and partials of Chalan Monsignor Guerrero (see attached map-areas with blue tracing will be affected)

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: W-6

CUC is currently building a new sewer line in Chalan Kiya. Along the path of the new sewer line project is one concrete power pole belonging to CUC. This concrete pole will be relocated across the road along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road. The concrete pole relocation will begin on Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021, and the duration of the project is estimated to last five hours, from 9am to 2pm.

To maximize public safety and to minimize the power pole relocation time, both outer lanes along the Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road (the northern westbound and southern eastbound lanes) will be closed around the project site for the duration of the project. Furthermore, during the transferring of the primary power line conductors, all four lanes will be closed for approximately 15-20 minutes.

For the safety of our men and women working at the job site, motorists are advised to proceed with caution when traveling by the work site or to take an alternative route as road lanes will be closed during the project.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 285-7859 | Fax. (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DIMAS ATALIG HOCOG, Deceased.

Civil Action No. 11-0010
AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON AMENDED PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR; and NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Judge: Joseph N. Camacho
Date: March 4, 2021
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Courtroom: Superior Court

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS THE LATE DIMAS ATALIG HOCOG:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam, has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the **Estate of Dimas Atalig Hocog, Decedent**. The attorney for Petitioner is **Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950**.

The hearing on the Amended Petition for Letters of Administration and Appointment of Administrator by **Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam**, as Petitioner, is scheduled to be heard on **March 4, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.**, at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma' Hustisia, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

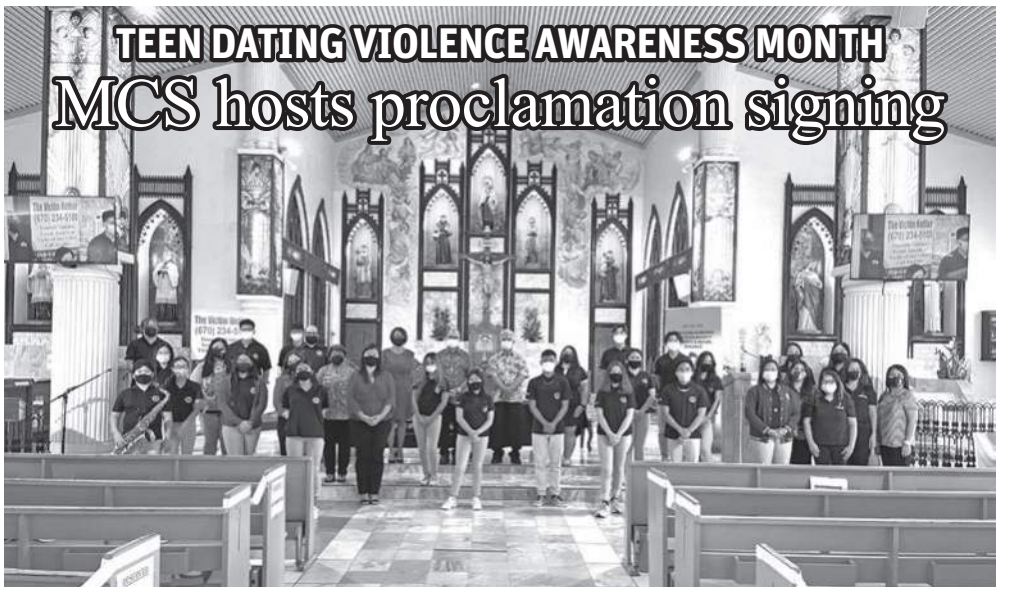
Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the Decedent or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of the first publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to **ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated**.

Dated this 12th day of February, 2021.

By: /s/
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

EMPLOYMENT

Civil Engineer: Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering (maybe foreign educational equivalent). In charge of cost estimation and project supervision as well as documentations required such as Reports, Shop Drawings, Submittals, RFIs, Variations/Change Orders, Billings, Close-out and Coordination with project stakeholders. 36-month experience as Civil Engineer. Send resume to: RCJL Corporation, dba RNV Construction, Attn: Human Resources, P.O. Box 504974, Saipan, MP 96950



The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence selected Mount Carmel School to host this year's proclamation signing for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This year, the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence selected Mount Carmel School to host the proclamation signing for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

During the event, Mount Carmel School had multiple student performances focused on understanding what teen dating violence is and how to seek support. Students recited original poems, performed two musical numbers, and gave a theatrical reading with information about teen dating violence. For inspirational remarks, Mount Carmel School invited Malyssa Castro, a survivor of teen dating violence, who has shared her personal experience and how she persevered through that time of her life. Representing the Office of the Governor was Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, who himself is an MCS alumnus, called an AlumKnight. In his remarks after the proclamation signing, Palacios said, "…Only through discussing issues and challenges can we begin to let members of our community know that there is a problem that needs to be fixed and there are issues that we need to continuously bring to the forefront of our teenagers."

MCS president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero said, "I'm very proud of our students for organizing this year's Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month proclamation signing. I would also like to thank Ms. Malyssa Castro for sharing her story with our community. What her personal narrative gave us was an understanding about how complex abusive relationships can be and how to come out stronger through that adversity. In the CNMI, Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is celebrated in February. The event is meant to engage with students in the middle school and high school students about healthy versus unhealthy relationships. To watch the live stream of the proclamation signing, visit Mount Carmel School's Facebook page (@mtcarmelcnmi) or Mount Carmel School's YouTube channel (Mount Carmel School). ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold its regular board meeting on **Friday, February 26, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.** The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building. The following agenda will be considered and public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

I. Preliminary Matters
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Adoption of Minutes
  1. January 15, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- E. Correspondence

II. Management Reports
- A. Executive Director's Report
  1. Update on Kiosk
  2. Update on Advanced Metered Infrastructure (AMI)
- B. Chief Financial Officer's Report

III. Committee Reports

IV. Old Business - Updates
- A. CHCC Billing/Payment
- B. Power Plant , DE5 and DE7
- C. Bill re CHCC Water/Wastewater Rates
- D. Cost of Service Study
- E. CUC Master Plan

V. New Business
- A. Procurement Matters for Approval
- B. Executive Director's Performance Evaluation
- C. FY 2022 Budget

VI. Public Comments**

VII. Executive Session***

VIII. Announcements

IX. Adjournment

/s/ MIRANDA V. MANGLONA, Chairwoman

* In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by a recorded vote of the majority members of the governing body.
** All interested persons are welcome to attend, and submit written and oral testimony on the above-agenda items. Public Comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes.
*** Pursuant to 1 CMC §9912, the CUC Board of Directors may vote to meet at any time in executive session, in consultation with the Legal Counsel on matters deemed privileged and confidential.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairperson of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Special Board Meeting is scheduled on Friday, February 26, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance. In compliance with the CNMI COVID-19 guidelines, Face-mask must be worn, social distancing will be enforced, and not more than ten (10) people will be allowed in the conference room during the course of the meeting.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
- a. Articles and By-Laws

IV. OLD BUSINESS
- a. CDBG-DR Updates

V. NEW BUSINESS
- a. CDBG-DR Internal Audit Charter
- b. FY 2022 Budget
- c. Personnel
- d. Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination
- e. Proposed CDBG-DR Action Plan Substantial and Non-Substantial Amendment

VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO ITEMS ABOVE

IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Notes: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13 (a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Chairperson of the Board

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IN A BID TO HELP DIVERSIFY ECONOMY, CREATE NEW JOBS

Demapan bill seeks to restructure and rename CDA

Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) has pre-filed House Bill 22-21, also known as the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority Act of 2021, that would restructure the Commonwealth Development Authority and rename it the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority, or CEDA.

Demapan noted that, while CDA has succeeded in its mandate in the last 36 years, there is a need to amend the statutory language that created CDA to provide it with the tools it needs for the challenges of the 21st Century.

"The Commonwealth economy requires a renewed focus on economic development and diversification to provide jobs and economic opportunity to a community that has beleaguered with natural disasters, global crisis, and the lingering impacts of the widespread collapse of the manufacturing sector that has resulted in volatilities inherent within an undiversified economy," said Demapan.

The proposed legislation aims to strengthen the tools and powers of the CNMI government's ability to promote and expand economic development by restructuring the CDA, as global and regional economic landscapes change and industries evolve.

"A targeted focus of a single governmental entity to plan for and implement efforts to cultivate a stronger, more diversified economy for the Commonwealth is necessary in establishing competitiveness against locations vying for global investments," added Demapan. "The purpose of [CEDA] will be to serve as the primary agency tasked with the economic development of the Commonwealth, and to be empowered to undertake this mandate with the flexibility to become proactive in the pursuit of industries and investments that will strengthen the CNMI economy."

Under H.B. 22-21, Demapan proposes to amend Title 4, Division 10, Chapter 2, § 10203(a) to add five new subsections to the current powers of the agency as follows:

1. To assist in the development of the economic development plan for the Commonwealth, and control and implement that part of the plan assigned to it by the governor of the CNMI.

2. To be responsible for actively promoting the CNMI as a location for private investment.

3. To promote and encourage the CNMI and development of new businesses within the Commonwealth, as well as promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses.

4. To promote and encourage the expansion and development of market for the products of the CNMI and to encourage the establishment of commercial linkages of CNMI products within the CNMI tourism industry.

5. To coordinate, develop, and participate in off-island investor missions to generate interest and investment in the CNMI, with emphasis on business investments from the United States of America.

Demapan also noted that the proposed legislation stemmed from concerns raised by the business community and the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers.

"In the midst of the ongoing global pandemic, the CNMI, like most parts of the world, finds itself in an opportune time to make necessary pivots and innovatively prepare for rebuilding and restoring our economy," said Demapan. "By restructuring CDA and updating the agency's economic development and diversification strategies, the CNMI will be poised to become much more competitive in its efforts to attract viable investments to the islands."

In addition to promoting the CNMI as a location for private investment, Demapan proposes that the new CEDA also implement policies for the expansion and retention of existing businesses, the promotion and marketing of products of the CNMI, and the undertaking of promotional activities for CNMI investments in line with the economic development plan for the CNMI.

"Ultimately, the overarching intent of this legislation is to spur new and viable economic investments to the CNMI, generate new and much needed revenues, and provide jobs to our people, many of whom have been displaced by the adverse impacts of the global pandemic," added Demapan. ***(PR)***

Deadline for SHEFA supporting documents

The Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance is reminding its beneficiaries of the deadline to submit all supporting documents.

In a notice yesterday, SHEFA said that all supporting documents must be submitted by March 1, 2021, (Monday) at the SHEFA office, located at the Saipan Mayor's Office behind the Oleai Sports Complex track and field. Office hours are from 7:30am to 4:30pm.

"Please make sure all documents are complete before submission," said the SHEFA notice. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its quarterly board meeting on **Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 8:00a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Governor's Office Conference Room, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda (November 24, 2020)
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairman's Report
VII. Director's Report
  A. Financial Report
  B. FY2022 Propose Budget
  C. NCEES and CLARB Virtual Meetings
VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  A. Governor's Office
    1.) OMB FY2022 Budget Call
  B. Legislature
X. Old Business
XI. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with counsel with pending or anticipated legal matters.
XII. New Business
XIII. Applications for Board's Review
XIV. Miscellaneous Business
XV. Announcements
  A. Next Meeting Date
  B. Adjournment of Meeting

AQUA RESORT CLUB
Saipan

COSTA'S BUFFET IS BACK!
at Aqua Resort Club Saipan

SEAFOOD NIGHT BUFFET

Our Seafood Night Dinner Buffet is back! Indulge in all-you-can-eat Seafood appetizers, entrees, side dishes and delicious desserts, All complimented with bottomless beer!

FRIDAY • 6pm-9pm
Adults $38 | Children $19

STEAK NIGHT BUFFET

Our delicious Steak Night Dinner Buffet is back! All-you-can-eat Steak, fresh salad bar, side dishes, and desserts. Free-Flowing Red & White Wine and Bottomless beer & sodas!

SATURDAY • 6pm-9pm
Adults $38 | Children $19

SUNDAY BRUNCH BUFFET

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SUNDAY • 11am-2pm
Adults $38 | Children $19

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXI, Issue No. 37

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

The US is doing better on the COVID vaccination front than it might seem

Vaccine shortages and precious doses wasted. Unnavigable systems for making appointments. A stark racial and economic divide in the distribution of shots. Scary virus mutants that may render vaccines ineffective. Protesters disrupting vaccination sites.

It may seem at times that the high hopes for the COVID-19 vaccination rollout have fizzled since December, when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave emergency authorization to the first vaccine. But step back for a moment and chew on this little factoid: In just two months, the U.S. has managed to administer 55 million shots—more than any other country—even during a chaotic time of plague and contentious presidential transition.

Overall, about 12% of the 330 million people in the U.S. have received at least one dose, primarily people who are at highest risk for sickness and death. And though five countries have vaccinated a larger percentage of their population (an impressive 76% in Israel), they have far fewer people to inoculate.

The Biden administration promised it would work with vaccine makers to increase production of doses, and it has delivered. In the last four weeks, the daily rate of inoculations has just about doubled.

Things are looking up in California too. Last month, it was among the worst states in using its share of COVID-19 vaccine doses. Now, thanks to the opening of mass vaccination centers, it's about average and has administered about 6.3 million shots.

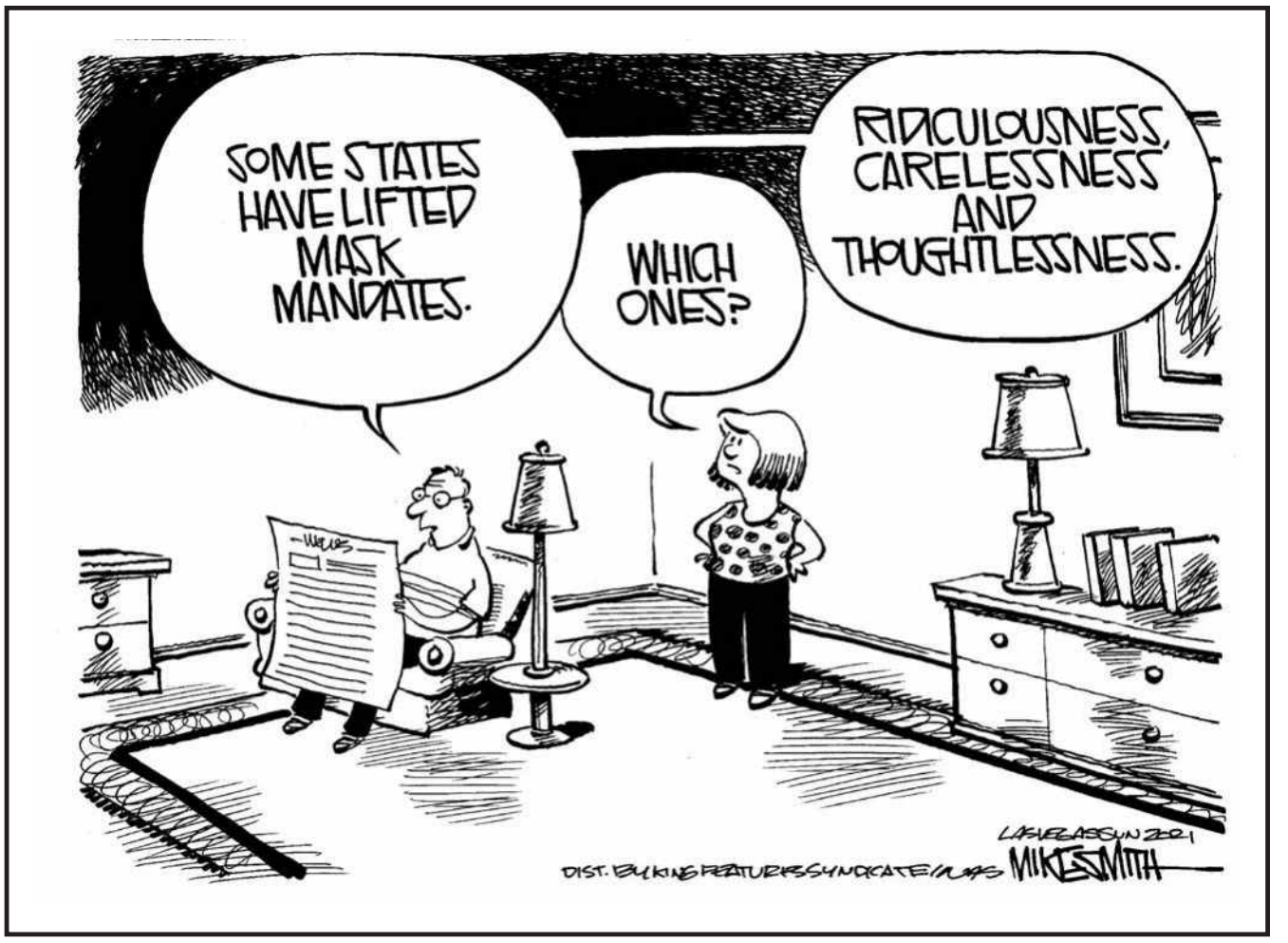
And while disparities in vaccine distribution are concerning, we are heartened by how quickly state and federal leaders have moved to open vaccination sites in underserved communities. Two of them, at Cal State Los Angeles and Oakland Coliseum, opened Tuesday, and each will be able to give out 6,000 doses a day.

Meanwhile, Johnson & Johnson's one-shot vaccine may be available for distribution in March. And though it has a lower rate of preventing infections than the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines now in use in the U.S., a 66% efficacy rate is nothing to sneeze at. Most important, like the other two vaccines, it's about 100% effective at preventing hospitalization or death. Plus, it doesn't require extreme cold storage, which will make it easier to distribute.

Scientists can't say for certain that being vaccinated reduces one's ability to transmit the virus, but recent studies offer promising indications that it does by lowering the viral load for the few people who do get sick after vaccination. If those preliminary studies are verified, it means that a fully vaccinated person protects both herself and her entire community.

Meanwhile, our collective vigilance is paying off. New

See COVID on Next Page



Civil suit against Trump will be a rare test of free speech

By NOAH FELDMAN
Bloomberg News

Noah Feldman is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist and host of the podcast Deep Background. He is a professor of law at Harvard University and was a clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter. His books include* The Three Lives of James Madison: Genius, Partisan, President.

Former President Donald Trump's lawyers defended him during his second impeachment trial in part by arguing that his Jan. 6 speech was protected by the First Amendment. That defense was legally irrelevant to the high crimes and misdemeanors charge, and wasn't settled by his acquittal.

But Trump's free speech defense may now get its day in court. Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., has filed a civil lawsuit against Trump, Rudy Giuliani, the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys for unlawfully conspiring to interfere with Congress in the Capitol attack in violation of the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. And while the First Amendment doesn't apply to impeachable offenses, it does apply in cases of civil liability.

Trump's best argument to get the case dismissed would be that he can't held liable for conspiring with those who attacked the Capitol if all he did was express his First Amendment-protected political views. To decide that, a federal court would have to determine whether Trump's speech was protected under the standard set by Brandenburg v. Ohio, the controlling precedent in incitement cases.

The statute that forms the basis of Thompson's lawsuit establishes liability when two or more persons conspire "by force, intimidation, or threat" to prevent any officer of the U.S. from the "lawful discharge of the duties of his office." On its face, the law covers the Jan. 6 attacks. There is no doubt that the rioters forcefully interfered with Congress' discharge of its duties, and that Thompson was one of the people who was affected.

To win the lawsuit, Thompson would have to prove that Trump and Giuliani conspired with those who attacked the Capitol. It would not be sufficient simply to show that the attackers were inspired by Trump's speech or by Giuliani's repeated assertions that the election was stolen. A conspiracy requires agreement to commit an illegal act and intent to get it done.

Trump's simplest defense strategy would be to claim that the words he spoke on and before Jan. 6 were protected by the First Amendment. Just like the government can't put you in prison for protected speech, the government can't hold you civilly liable for constitutionally protected speech. Being required to pay damages would violate your free expression rights.

The Brandenburg standard says that speech can only be penalized if it is directed towards inciting imminent lawless action and is actually likely to produce that lawless action. The second part of the test should be easy to satisfy in Trump's case, because the Jan. 6 attacks actually did occur right after Trump spoke. The hard part would be to show that Trump's words were "directed" to incitement, a standard that likely requires proof of Trump's intent to incite, or proof that his words were literally directed to inciting violence—or both.

Based on the evidence we've seen so far, Thompson's complaint may not be able to meet that standard. Even if Thompson could convince a jury that Trump and Giuliani conspired with the attackers, Thompson can't win unless a judge first determines that Trump's conduct violated Brandenburg. For that reason, Trump would be likely to raise his First Amendment defense right away, asking the judge to throw out the case before it ever got to trial.

The fact is, it's hard to prove incitement under the Brandenburg standard. That's why criminal prosecutors so rarely attempt it. Instead, when prosecutors want to convict someone for speech connected to violence, they tend to bring charges under statutes like the one that criminalizes material support for terrorism.

Under the material support statute, it's possible to criminally punish speech that is uttered as part of a coordinated effort to support terrorist activity—even if that speech, uttered in an uncoordinated context, would ordinarily be protected. In the landmark decision of Holder v. Humanitarian Law Society, the Supreme Court sidestepped Brandenburg altogether in upholding the material support statute.

So far, the material support statute only applies to the support of a foreign terrorist organization, not to domestic terrorist organizations. The courts haven't had the occasion to allow prosecutors to make an end-run around Brandenburg for material support of domestic terrorist groups. But Thompson's conspiracy suit hints at this eventual possibility.

In the future, if dissatisfaction with the Brandenburg standard grows, it's possible that conspiracy may become a route to punishing forms of speech that, like Trump's, skirted the very edge of incitement without crossing the constitutional line.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

What happens to your email and social media after you pass away?

FINE PRINT

By JORDAN SUNDELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jordan Sundell is a lawyer. His practice primarily focuses on business, real estate, estate planning, and asset protection. You can find his columns here every other Tuesday as well as on The Fine Print on Facebook. You can contact Mr. Sundell via this newspaper at editor@saipantribune.com or 235-6397/235-2440.

Long gone are the days when your cherished memories were stored in handwritten letters and boxes of Polaroid photos. These days a person's legacy is primarily housed online across a string of websites and social-media apps bursting with photos, messages, and more.

But while online life continues to expand, few people think about what will happen to that treasure trove of memories and information if they die or become incapacitated. For example, have you ever thought about what happens to your email after you pass away? How about your Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts? And what about your photos and files on Dropbox, Google Drive, and other services?

These services introduce a variety of new estate-planning issues. To name a few: Who can access the accounts? How can they obtain that access? And what do you want that person to do once they have access? Do you want them to close out the account right away, send notifications to your contacts that you passed away, or leave it running as is? And if the account is left active, what should be done if your account gets hacked, leading your friends and family to get messages from "you" after you're gone?

As the world increasingly runs through phones, tablets, laptops, and online platforms, it's helpful to have a plan for your digital accounts and assets. To create that plan, follow these steps.

Start by getting a lay of the land. Do that by making an inventory of your online accounts and social media. List the apps and websites you use; and then compile usernames, pins and passwords as well as security questions and answers.

Next, pick a digital agent to handle your accounts if you die or become incapacitated. Often, this person will also be the person you designate as the executor of your will, the trustee of your trust, or one of your agents under financial or medical powers of attorney. But whoever it ends up being, choose someone trustworthy who preferably has a bit of technological savvy.

After that, create a document appointing your chosen agent and giving them authority to act on your behalf. Sometimes this document is called a social-media will. But whatever name is used, the document should provide instructions for what you want to happen.

Sometimes this document will also include the inventory that you prepared in step one. But since the document might become a public record, it can be a good idea to forego attaching the inventory and instead give that information directly to your agent. Or, if you want to keep that information confidential for as long as possible, don't give the inventory to your agent. Instead, tell them how to find your inventory when you die or become incapacitated.

The final step is to realize that all of your digital media and assets are subject to Terms of Use and Service. These contracts set forth rules between you and the service provider. These Terms, in turn, will affect your estate plan. So, while a social-media will can save a good bit of trouble later, they are not the only word on what will happen. As a result, your agent should expect some bureaucratic bumps if they need to deal directly with service providers.

To sum up, your email and social-media accounts can survive long after you've gone. If you don't mind them continuing on as zombies, then you probably don't need to plan ahead. But if you'd like more control than that, it can be wise to set up a social-media will in addition to the usual assortment of estate-planning documents.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

Reawakening

By KEITH C. BURRIS
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Keith C. Burris is editor, vice president and editorial director of Block Newspapers. Email: kburris@post-gazette.com.

I recently spoke with U.S. Sen. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania about impeachment, the hope of bipartisanship and the future of the Republican Party and the country.

Toomey is a thoughtful and principled guy who, like Rob Portman of Ohio, is choosing to leave the Senate of his own accord.

In Toomey's case there was a self-imposed term limit. But with both of these men, though they are generally as upbeat as they are upright, I see frustration, and more than a little bit of despair.

Toomey told me that President Joe Biden talks unity but seems to be, so far, governing from the left, seeking Democratic votes only. Moderate Republicans, not including Toomey but including Portman, offered a more modest COVID-19 relief bill than the Democrats want ($600 billion versus $1.9 trillion), and the president decided to bypass them.

Toomey thinks there is no real justification behind either bailout. I think he's right.

Portman points out that Congress just passed a $900 billion relief bill, and most of the money has yet to be subject to a clear goal or sound accounting.

So you have a couple of capable senators, the kind you want to stay in the Congress, and stick with the Republican Party, giving up.

John F. Kennedy used to say, "We can do better."

Barack Obama used to say, "Better is still better."

Politics is the art of finding "proximate solutions to insoluble problems" (Reinhold Niebuhr).

What happens when our leaders lose hope that we can do better?

It's not hard to see how we got here.

The Democrats give every evidence of overreaching—of misreading their moment.

So they could very well lose the House in 2022. Most Americans are not woke and don't want to be. The blogosphere and cancel culture are not the country. Thank God.

But traditional Republicans have lost the war for control of the GOP. It is no longer the party that favors originalist judges, free markets, limited government and fiscal responsibility. It is the party of anger, resentment and grievance—the Trump party. And that party thumbs its nose at law, custom and institutions, as well as at quiet doers like Toomey and Portman.

The fringe controls both parties. So there can be no progress, which is possible only with compromise.

We seem to be doomed to a cycle of reaction, executive actions and reversals of the previous president, and impeachments.

And real legislators are being replaced by people like Marjorie Taylor Greene, who is just fine with no committee assignment, thanks. Why work when you can spend your time in Congress tweeting, ranting and posturing?

If Democrats really wanted to punish her they would have given her more committee work, not less.

We need to break the fringe stranglehold on at least one of the parties.

Or we need a new party.

Maybe, instead of toying with blocking Trump from running for office again, which is surely undemocratic, even if it is constitutional, we need Republican officeholders to say they will not support a GOP ticket in 2024 with Trump at the top.

Many Democrats took such a pledge regarding George Wallace in 1972 and 1976, when he seemed to have a real chance at winning the Democratic presidential nomination.

The founders were so right about faction. A strong party system puts the country in the back seat and independent thought in the trunk.

We made it work for years with big tents and professional politicians who knew how to work together between elections. But it is breaking down now.

The founders did not foresee, and could not foresee, what talk radio and then the internet would do to us. The civic fabric has been rent. Politics has become one, long bitter argument—like a bad marriage in which no one will listen, no one will learn, and no one will leave.

Well, right now, the good guys are leaving.

That's why, beyond party reform or a new party, we need something much bigger in America. We need a moral awakening.

And for me that moral awakening would, partially, look like this: First, a mass return to church-going. Second, a massive new wave of volunteerism—doing good works, both personally and organizationally.

For it strikes me that many of the very same Americans who stay home on Sunday mornings place ultimate faith in their political tribes and echo chambers.

They also believe in virtual capital punishment. If a professor misspeaks with no ill intent, he must nevertheless be destroyed. If a country singer loses it and lashes out and then apologizes, his apology will not be accepted. He must be sacrificed. We slaughter reputations instead of lambs now.

It also strikes me that we have reached the limits of what government can do to mend individuals or society. Driving up the current $27 trillion national debt by another $2 trillion will not end COVID-19 or anxiety about COVID-19. And free college tuition will not make college education better or more useful for those who seek it.

We need to get back to voluntary associations and neighborliness.

Fred Rogers, the ultimate neighbor, said, after 9/11: "Look for the helpers."

When I look for the helpers I do not see politicians. I see Baldemar Velasquez, of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, still trying to protect and find some measure of justice for the poorest working people in our nation. He's been at it for 40 years and now is working with young people in poor families in Toledo, Ohio, with his "Homies" program, to teach them how to organize themselves and their lives so that they have legal rights and an economic future.

Velasquez literally lives for others. Years ago, he refused the efforts of a friend who wanted to help him create a pension. No such thing for a farm worker, he said

I see the Rev. Gregory Boyle, of Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, working with young gang members to attain for them three simple things: a supportive community, some sort of internal or spiritual savings account, and work—usefulness and income. These are the things we all seek, but some people never get close to them.

I see the downtown churches of Pittsburgh, and people like the Rev. Dan Turis, trying to find the homeless so he can feed the homeless during a pandemic, and the Rev. Tom Hall, taking a whole year to study and preach the Gospel of John in the midst of it all. (Full disclosure: These two men are at First Presbyterian Church, in Pittsburgh, where I go to pray.)

These are just a few of the helpers, who, quietly, practice the politics of Dorothy Day and Fred Rogers: Don't talk compassion, live it. Don't emote for the dispossessed or write them a Christmas check. Feed and clothe them. Personally.

Walk with someone who hurts. And be content if he forgets to thank you.

Only a massive moral reawakening, one that infuses kindness and goodwill into our angry and spouting-off culture, can save us from the nihilistic and self-destructive trajectory our politics is now on.

COVID

From Page 8

COVID-19 cases have dropped steeply to pre-holiday levels, possibly because of the precautions individuals are taking to avoid infection, the seasonality of the virus, or the growing ranks of those who have acquired immunity either through infection or vaccination—or possibly a combination of all three factors.

We're not out of the woods yet or at a point where we can throw out our masks and hug strangers on the street. But the trees are thinning and blue skies are peeking through.

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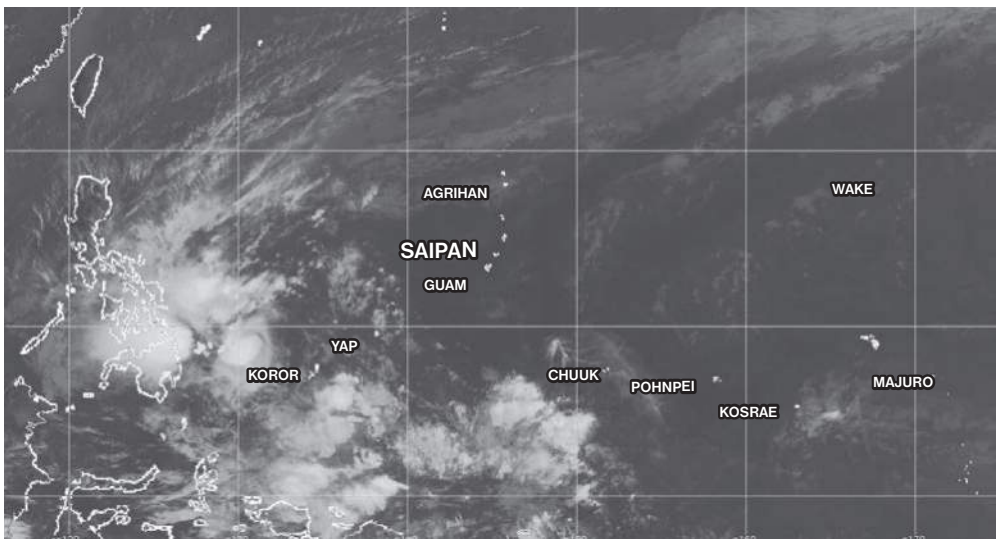
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy. A 10 percent chance of light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy. A 10 percent chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy. A 10 percent chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy. A 10 percent chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy. A 10 percent chance of light showers.
86º / 76º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:57 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows a narrow band of showers that passed through the Marianas in the past few hours, and are now largely moving away. Drier air and clearer skies will filter in behind them as the morning progresses. Otherwise, to the east is patchy trade-wind cloudiness and isolated light showers. The buoys reveal combined seas of 5 to 7 feet which are largely composed of a fading northwest swell, an east trade-wind swell, and trade-wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87º / 77º
Palau	Thunderstorms	85º / 77º
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85º / 78º
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85º / 79º
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86º / 79º
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84º / 78º
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85º / 79º

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Thursday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Saturday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:04 AM	2:31 PM
Wednesday	-	3:58 AM	3:27 PM
Thursday	-	4:50 AM	4:26 PM
Friday	-	5:41 AM	5:25 PM
Saturday	-	6:28 AM	6:24 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	75º / 63º
Beijing	Sunny	36º / 12º
Hong Kong	Sunny	63º / 54º
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	78º / 66º
London	Partly Cloudy	37º / 30º
Los Angeles	Sunny	75º / 53º
Manila	Partly Cloudy	84º / 72º
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	93º / 68º
Miami	Partly Cloudy	77º / 71º
New York	Partly Cloudy	43º / 30º
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	43º / 30º
Paris	Partly Cloudy	37º / 25º
Busan	Sunny	37º / 25º
Rome	Rain	55º / 46º
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69º / 55º
San Francisco	Sunny	66º / 50º
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	28º / 10º
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	45º / 28º
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	47º / 32º

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
6:25 AM	High Tide	1.49
11:14 AM	Low Tide	1.15
3:48 PM	High Tide	1.49
11:30 PM	Low Tide	-0.19

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:40am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

BAB Korean Restaurant *reopens* for dine-in

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Now you can enjoy Cup BAB inside the air-conditioned comforts of BAB Korean Restaurant, where the WiFi is strong and the ambiance exquisite. The Korean restaurant welcomed back dine-in guests this week and will initially only serve items from its affordable Cup BAB menu.

After 11 months of being closed due to COVID-19, the restaurant's reopening is another step toward operations going back to normal, said restaurant staff Dante Conlu. However, due to social distancing restrictions, the restaurant can only accommodate 45 dine-in guests for now.

Conlu said they were prompted to open the restaurant's doors to diners due to the clamor of loyal customers who have missed the dine-in experience. "They've been asking us for the longest time to reopen and after months of planning we're finally able to welcome them back and enjoy the full restaurant experience."

BAB Korean Restaurant started welcoming back dine-in guests this week. MARK RABAGO

The Cup BAB menu will initially be served at BAB Korean Restaurant. MARK RABAGO

Just some of the more popular dishes in Cup BAB's 16-item menu include tteok (rice cake and fish cake in spicy sauce), galbi soup (boned beef, radish, rice), dak-gangjeong (sweet and sour chicken), LA-BBQ BAB (beef short rib, kimchee, noodles, lettuce, rice), and volcano BAB (spicy pork, noodles, lettuce, rice). As always, dine-in customers can quench their thirst with Cup BAB's homemade blends like Hawaiian iced tea, cinnamon/ginger tea, and iced coffee.

"We'll be essentially serving our very popular Cup BAB menu to dine-in guests at our fully functional BAB Korean Restaurant. It will be the same taste and same price as the take-out and drive-thru menu but served inside our restaurant," said Conlu.

For reservations and for more information, call 233-4222

As for the Catholic faithful who are observing Lent and foregoing meat dishes, they can order Shake BAB (rice topped with vegetables), Squid BAB (spicy squid, noodles, lettuce, rice), and Ocean BAB (fish, kimchee, noodles, lettuce, rice), Conlu said.

Those pining for BAB Korean Restaurant's signature dishes like jeyuk-bokkeum (stir-fried squid) served with rice and vegetables, dolsot bibimbap (hot stone pot bibimbap), bulgogi hotpot, japchae (mixed dish of boiled bean threads, stir-fried vegetables, and shredded meat), dak-bokkeum-tang (braised spicy chicken), and budae jjigae (army stew) won't have to wait long, as Conlu assured that bringing them back in the regular menu is already in the works.

BAB Korean Restaurant is open Monday-Sunday from 11am to 8pm. For reservations and for more information, call 233-4222 or contact them on their Facebook page: BAB Korean Restaurant.

Cup BAB's ever popular Combo BAB will now get the BAB Korean Restaurant treatment. MARK RABAGO

After losing a company to COVID, owners seek the next gig

NEW YORK (AP)—As airlines slashed flights and furloughs appeared inevitable in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Mike Catania sensed there would be little need for a service that helped airline crews find short-term housing.

So, Catania and his fellow owners shut down Padloop in early March, even though the nearly year-old company had just broken even.

Catania started looking at how life was changing amid the pandemic and came up with the idea for his next business: Locaris, a website to help apartment renters connect with prospective neighbors to get the scoop on buildings and landlords. Because the pandemic limited people's ability to meet in person, Locaris enabled renters to get the lowdown on a building safely.

"I tried to focus on, what is COVID a catalyst for? What trends is it bringing to market a couple of years ahead of schedule?" says Catania, who lives in Henderson, Nevada. Locaris launched in June and quickly found success.

As owners are forced to shut businesses, they've had to figure out what to do next. For entrepreneurs like Catania, the answer has been anticipating the next trend and creating a company to take advantage of it. Some owners have started businesses similar to those they lost, or companies that fill a different role in the same industry. Others have gone to work for someone else, while perhaps holding onto hopes of eventually reviving the businesses they shuttered.

It's not known how many small businesses have failed in the pandemic, but different estimates all show devastation. Based on a projection last spring by the National Bureau of Economic Research, the number is likely well into the hundreds of thousands. Data from the work scheduling software company UKG shows that about one in six small businesses have closed their doors since the pandemic began. And the National Restaurant Association, a trade group, said 17% of U.S. restaurants, or more than 110,000, had permanently shut by Dec. 1; it's likely that many were small or mid-sized businesses.

Alex Willen of San Diego was preparing to open a dog boarding business when the pandemic hit; he was about to sign papers for a Small Business Administration loan to cover construction costs when his bank said it was putting new business loans on hold. Willen sensed the virus outbreak wouldn't end quickly, which meant dog owners wouldn't be traveling and many would keep working at home, eliminating the need for his services.

By May, the loan money was available, but Willen decided to give up rather than open the business and not have revenue for months, maybe longer.

"It was looking like COVID was not going away by November or December, and those are huge months for dog boarding," says Willen.

Willen soon decided to restart a business he'd shelved in favor of boarding: dog treats. Willen didn't have to start at square one because he had already done some preliminary marketing and package design for the business.

FAA orders United to inspect Boeing 777s after emergency

Federal aviation regulators are ordering United Airlines to step up inspections of all Boeing 777s equipped with the type of engine that suffered a catastrophic failure over Denver Saturday. United says it is temporarily removing those aircraft from service.

The announcements come a day after United Airlines Flight 328 had to make an emergency landing at Denver International Airport after its right engine blew apart just after takeoff. Pieces of the casing of the engine, a Pratt & Whitney PW4000, rained down on suburban neighborhoods.

The plane with 231 passengers and 10 crew on board landed safely, and nobody aboard or on the ground was reported hurt, authorities said.

The Federal Aviation Administration FAA Administrator Steve Dickson said in a statement Sunday that based on an initial review of safety data, inspectors "concluded that the inspection interval should be stepped up for the hollow fan blades that are unique to this model of engine, used solely on Boeing 777 airplanes."

The National Transportation Safety Board said in a separate statement that two of the engine's fan blades were fractured and the remainder of the fan blades "exhibited damage." The NTSB did caution that it was too early to draw conclusions about how the incident happened.

Video posted on Twitter showed the engine fully engulfed in flames as the plane flew through the air. Freeze frames from different video taken by a passenger sitting slightly in front of the engine and posted on Twitter appeared to show a broken fan blade in the engine.

United is the only U.S. airline with the Pratt & Whitney PW4000 in its fleet, the FAA said. United says it currently has 24 of the 777s in service.

United says it will work closely with the FAA and the NTSB "to determine any additional steps that are needed to ensure these aircraft meet our rigorous safety standards and can return to service."

The NTSB said the cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder were transported to its lab in Washington for the data to be downloaded and analyzed. NTSB investigations can take up to a year or longer, although in major cases the agency generally releases some investigative material midway through the process.

Airlines in Japan and South Korea also operate planes with the Pratt & Whitney engine. Japan Airways and All Nippon Airways have decided to stop operating a combined 32 planes with that engine, according to Nikkei.

Nikkei reported that Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism also ordered the planes out of service, and the ministry said an engine in the same PW4000 family suffered unspecified trouble on a JAL 777 flying to Haneda from Naha on Dec. 4. It ordered stricter inspections in response. ***(AP)***

Nation

Beyond 100M: Biden team aiming for bigger vaccine numbers

AP
In this Feb. 19, 2021, file photo President Joe Biden and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, tour a Pfizer manufacturing site, Friday, Feb. 19, 2021, in Portage, Mich.

WASHINGTON (AP)—It sounded so ambitious at first blush: 100 million vaccination shots in 100 days.

Now, one month into his presidency, Joe Biden is on a glide path to attain that goal and pitching well beyond it to the far more ambitious and daunting mission of vaccinating all eligible adults against the coronavirus by the end of the summer.

Limited supply of the two approved COVID-19 vaccines has hampered the pace of vaccinations—and that was before extreme winter weather delayed the delivery of about 6 million doses this past week. But the United States is on the verge of a supply breakthrough as manufacturing ramps up and with the expectation of a third vaccine becoming available in the coming weeks.

That means the act of delivering injections will soon be the dominant constraint, and it's prompting the Biden administration to push to dramatically expand the universe of those who will deliver injections and where Americans will meet them to get their shots.

"It's one thing to have the vaccine, and it's very different to get it in someone's arms," Biden said Friday as he toured Pfizer's manufacturing plant in Portage, Michigan. The company is set to double its pace of vaccine deliveries in the coming weeks.

Since their approval in December, more than 75 million doses of the two-shot-regimen Moderna and Pfizer vaccines have been distributed, of which 63 million have been injected, reaching 13% of Americans. Nearly 45 million of those doses have been administered since Biden's inauguration on Jan. 20.

The pace of deliveries of those vaccines is about to take off. About 145 million doses are set for delivery in the next 5 1/2 weeks, with an additional 200 million expected by the end of May and a further 200 million by the end of July.

That's before the anticipated approval by the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use of a third vaccine, from Johnson & Johnson. The single-dose J&J vaccine is expected to help speed the path to immunity and requires half the vaccination resources of the two-shot regimens. But there is no massive stockpile of J&J doses ready to roll out on Day One.

"We're going to be starting with only a few million in inventory," White House COVID-19 coordinator Jeff Zients said this past week. Still, when combined with the anticipated increases in the other vaccines, the J&J doses could prove the pivotal advance in delivering enough shots for nearly all American adults by the end of June, at least a month earlier than currently anticipated.

The daily inoculation average climbed to 1.7 million shots per day last week, but as many as double that number of doses are soon expected to be available on average each day. The focus of Biden's team is now quickly shifting to ensuring those doses can get used, though the administration has resisted the calls of some health experts to publicly set a "moonshot" target for how many daily doses it hopes to deliver.

Biden first set his target of 100 million doses in 100 days on Dec. 8, days before the first vaccines received emergency use authorization. By Inauguration Day, it was clear the U.S. was on course to attain that goal.

Dr. Leana Wen, an emergency physician and public health professor at George Washington University, said she would like to see the administration commit to a more ambitious 3 million shot-per-day target.

"I want to see them put that stake in the ground and ask everyone to help them achieve that goal," she said.

The current pace of vaccination dipped markedly in recent days as winter weather shuttered administration sites in Texas and across the South, and icy conditions stranded supplies at shipping hubs in Louisville, Kentucky and Memphis, Tennessee.

One-third of the delayed doses have already been delivered, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease specialist, announced Sunday. The White House anticipates that remaining delayed doses will be injected by March 1 and that the daily pace of vaccinations will continue to climb.

Much of the increase, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, comes from people receiving their second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. The pace of first-dose vaccinations, meanwhile, has been largely steady over the past several weeks, hovering around an average of 900,000 shots per day.

Hospitals confront water shortages in winter storm aftermath

HOUSTON (AP)—Hospitals across the South grappled with water shortages Sunday in the wake of a devastating winter storm as the region carried on with recovery efforts and the weather offered a balmy respite—temperatures as high as the mid-60s.

At the height of last week's storm, hospitals scrambled to care for patients amid record cold temperatures, snow and ice that battered parts of the country more accustomed to going through winter with light jackets and short sleeves. The icy blast ruptured water mains, knocked out power to millions of utility customers and contributed to at least 76 deaths—half of which occurred in Texas. At least seven people died in Tennessee and four in Portland, Oregon.

A rural hospital in Anahuac, Texas, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) east of Houston, lost both water and power.

William Kiefer, CEO of Chambers Health, which runs the hospital along with two clinics and a wellness center, said the facilities resorted to backup generators and water from a 275-gallon storage tank. They refilled it three times using water from a swimming pool in the wellness center.

When temperatures were in the teens last Monday, a woman about to give birth walked into the hospital after she could not make it through the ice and snow to her hospital in suburban Houston. Emergency room staff delivered the baby safely, Kiefer said.

"It would have taken her another two hours to get to (the suburban Houston hospital) if our facility wasn't there," he said. "We can probably assume she would have had the baby in her car and the snow. Not a good situation."

Water was restored Thursday, and operations had returned to normal on Sunday, he said. The health system plans to look into installing more sophisticated backup systems, he said.

Houston Methodist Hospital spokeswoman Gale Smith said water had been restored at two community hospitals in the system, which was dealing with an influx of dialysis patients after their local centers closed, she added.

After temperatures plunged as much as 40 degrees below normal last week, the forecast for the Houston area called for a high of 65 degrees (18 degrees Celsius) on Sunday. The city lifted its boil-water advisory on Sunday afternoon.

About 30,000 Texans were still without power due to downed power lines and other equipment failures. Gov. Greg Abbott said during a news conference that he expected all service to be restored by Sunday night or Monday.

Abbott also said he was concerned about the threat of massive electric bills after wholesale energy prices skyrocketed while power plants were offline. He said it would be the "top priority" for the Legislature, and he vowed not to end the legislative session until lawmakers ensure that the state's power grid is retrofitted to handle extreme winter and summer weather.

Nearly 230,000 customers across the South were still without power as of Sunday, according to PowerOutage.us, a website that tracks power outages. Other large blackouts were in Mississippi, West Virginia, Kentucky and Oregon.

Memphis, Tennessee, saw 10 inches of snow last week. Memphis, Light, Gas & Water issued a boil-water advisory on Thursday out of concern that low water pressure caused by problems at aging pumping stations and water main ruptures could lead to contamination. The advisory was still in place Sunday; utility officials said they did not know when they might lift it.

About 260,000 homes and businesses were under the advisory. Hospitals and nursing homes have been forced to switch to bottled water. The Tennessee National Guard was supplying St. Francis Hospital with water.

Officer shot at Arkansas McDonald's; kidnapping suspect dies

LONOKE, Ark. (AP)—An Arkansas police officer was hospitalized in stable condition Sunday after being shot during a confrontation at a McDonald's restaurant with a man who was kidnapping a 14-year-old North Carolina girl, authorities said.

The suspect died from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound after fleeing from authorities, according to the Arkansas State Police. The girl was found safe.

Two Lonoke, Arkansas, police officers confronted the driver of an SUV parked at the fast-food restaurant Saturday night after the vehicle was connected to a North Carolina child abduction case. Lonoke is located about 27 miles (43 kilometers) east of Little Rock.

The driver, later identified as William Robert Ice, 38, of Jackson Center, Pennsylvania, began shooting at the officers as he exited the SUV. One officer was hit while the other one, who was uninjured, returned gunfire as Ice entered the vehicle again and fled, according to state police.

An Arkansas State Trooper spotted the SUV and pursued it until the vehicle became disabled in a snowbank. The 14-year-old girl fled from the vehicle and was secured by a state trooper.

Inside the SUV, a trooper found Ice critically injured from what preliminarily appears to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Ice later died at a Little Rock hospital.

Arkansas State Police, working with sheriff's deputies in Davidson County, North Carolina, and with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation determined the girl had been kidnapped.

Ice was also wanted by Pennsylvania law enforcement authorities in connection with other child predator cases, according to Arkansas State Police.

Asia

Myanmar call for general strike draws junta threat

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—A call for a Monday general strike by demonstrators in Myanmar protesting the military's seizure of power has been met by the ruling junta with a thinly veiled threat to use lethal force, raising the possibility of major clashes.

The call for a general strike was made Sunday by the Civil Disobedience Movement, a loosely organized group leading resistance to the army's Feb. 1 takeover. It asked people to gather together for the Five Twos—referring to the digits in Monday's date—to make a "Spring Revolution."

State television broadcaster MRTV late Sunday carried a public announcement from the junta, formally called the State Administration Council, warning against the general strike.

"It is found that the protesters have raised their incitement towards riot and anarchy mob on the day of 22 February. Protesters are now inciting the people, especially emotional teenagers and youths, to a confrontation path where they will suffer the loss of life," it said in an English language text shown onscreen. The spoken announcement in Burmese said the same thing.

AP

Students from the University of Medicine protest demonstrating by holding the brunches of Eugenia which is in the belief that the uprising is going to have succeeded, during an anti-coup protest in Mandalay, Myanmar, Sunday, Feb. 21, 2021.

Another part of the statement blamed protesters whose numbers allegedly included criminal gangs for violence at demonstrations, with the result that "the security force members had to fire back." Three protesters have been shot dead so far.

The protest movement has embraced nonviolence and only occasionally gotten into shoving matches with police and thrown bottles at them when provoked.

In Yangon, the country's biggest city, trucks cruised the streets Sunday night blaring announcements that people should not attend protests Monday and must honor a ban on gatherings of five or more people. The ban was issued shortly after the coup but not enforced in Yangon, which for the past two weeks has been the scene of large daily demonstrations.

Many social media postings ahead of the scheduled nightly 1 a.m. cutoff of internet access service said security forces had set up roadblocks at strategic points in the city, including bridges and on streets leading to foreign embassies. Information on Twitter accounts that have proven reliable in the past said internet blocking, usually lasting until 9 a.m., would be extended to noon in Yangon.

China urges US to lift trade restrictions, stop interference

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called on the U.S. Monday to lift restrictions on trade and people-to-people contacts while ceasing what Beijing considers unwarranted interference in the areas of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.

Wang's comments at a Foreign Ministry forum on U.S.-China relations come as Beijing is pressing the administration of President Joe Biden to drop many of the confrontational measures adopted by his predecessor Donald Trump.

Among those are pressure over trade and technology grievances that prompted Trump to hike tariffs on Chinese imports in 2017 and impose bans or other restrictions on Chinese tech companies and academic exchanges.

Trump also upgraded military and diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy claimed by China as its own territory, while sanctioning Chinese officials blamed for abuses against Muslim minorities in Xinjiang and a crackdown on freedoms in Hong Kong.

"We know that the new U.S. administration is reviewing and assessing its foreign policy we hope that the U.S. policy makers will keep pace with the times, see clearly the trend of the world, abandon biases, give up unwarranted suspicions and move to bring the China policy back to reason to ensure a healthy steady development of China-U.S. relations," Wang told diplomats, scholars and journalists at the Lanting Forum.

While Biden has pledged reengagement and a more civil tone in U.S. diplomacy, its unclear whether he will make any fundamental changes in Washington's policies toward Beijing.

China faces more opposition than ever in Washington due to its trade record, territorial disputes with neighbors, and accusations of technology theft and spying. Taiwan enjoys strong bipartisan support, as do criticisms of China's human rights record, especially on Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.

Wang said China had "no intention to challenge or replace the United States" and was ready to peacefully coexist and seek common development.

Wang urged the U.S. to "stop smearing" the reputation of China's ruling Communist Party and to "stop conniving at or even supporting the erroneous words and actions of separatist forces for Taiwan independence and stop undermining China's sovereignty and security on internal affairs concerning Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet."

Wang said the U.S. should reactivate all levels of dialogue which he said the U.S. had effectively halted under the Trump administration, and boost cooperation on major bilateral and international issues. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the global economic recovery are the three biggest issues on which the sides can cooperate, he said.

World

UN nuclear chief says Iran to grant 'less access' to program

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran will begin to offer United Nations inspectors "less access" to its nuclear program as part of its pressure campaign on the West, though investigators will still be able to monitor Tehran's work, the U.N. atomic watchdog's chief said Sunday.

Rafael Grossi's comments came after an emergency trip to Iran in which he said the International Atomic Energy Agency reached a "technical understanding" with Tehran to continue to allow monitoring of its nuclear program for up to three months. But his remarks to journalists underlined a narrowing window for the U.S. and others to reach terms with Iran, which is already enriching and stockpiling uranium at levels far beyond those allowed by its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

"The hope of the IAEA has been to stabilize a situation which was very unstable," Grossi said at the airport after his arrival back in Vienna, where the agency is based. "I think this technical understanding does it so that other political consultations at other levels can take place and most importantly we can avoid a situation in which we would have been, in practical terms, flying blind."

Grossi, the IAEA's director general, offered few specifics of the agreement he had reached with Iranian leaders. He said the number of inspectors on the ground would remain the same but that "what changes is the type of activity" the agency was able to carry out, without elaborating further. He stressed monitoring would continue "in a satisfactory manner."

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who under President Hassan Rouhani helped reach the atomic accord, said the IAEA would be prevented from accessing footage from their cameras at nuclear sites. That came during a state TV interview Sunday even before his meeting with Grossi.

"This is not a deadline for the world. This is not an ultimatum," Zarif told the government-run, English-language broadcaster Press TV. "This is an internal domestic issue between the parliament and the government."

"We have a democracy. We are supposed to implement the laws of the country. And the parliament adopted legislation—whether we like it or not."

Zarif's comments marked the highest-level acknowledgement yet of what Iran planned to do when it stopped following the so-called "Additional Protocol," a confidential agreement between Tehran and the IAEA reached as part of the landmark 2015 nuclear deal. The IAEA has additional protocols with a number of countries it monitors.

Under the protocol with Iran, the IAEA "collects and analyzes hundreds of thousands of images captured daily by its sophisticated surveillance cameras," the agency said in 2017. The agency also said then that it had placed "2,000 tamper-proof seals on nuclear material and equipment."

In his interview, Zarif said authorities would be "required by law not to provide the tapes of those cameras." It wasn't immediately clear if that also meant the cameras would be turned off entirely as Zarif called that a "technical decision, that's not a political decision."

"The IAEA certainly will not get footage from those cameras," Zarif said.

Libyan interior minister survives attack on motorcade

CAIRO (AP)—The interior minister of Libya's U.N.-backed government survived an ambush by gunmen on his motorcade on Sunday, a brazen attack highlighting the towering challenges that remain for the newly appointed government that is trying to unite the country before elections late this year.

Armed men opened fire at Fathi Bashagha's motorcade on a highway in Tripoli, wounding at least one of his guards, said Amin al-Hashmi, a spokesman for the Tripoli-based Health Ministry.

He said the minister survived the attack and his guards chased the assailants, killing one and detaining two others.

The Interior Ministry said in a statement that Bashagha was was returning to his residence in the Janzour neighborhood when armed men in an armored vehicle opened fire on his convoy.

The statement called the attack an "attempted assassination" of the minister.

Earlier Sunday, Bashagha met with Mustafa Sanalla, head of Libya's National Oil Corporation to discuss the security of oil facilities and how to strengthen the corporation's independence to "ensure a fair distribution of wealth among all Libyans." He posted a photo for both of them on his Twitter account, calling their meeting "fruitful."

The U.S. Ambassador in Libya Richard Norland also condemned the attack and called for an investigation to hold those responsible accountable.

"Minister Bashaga's focus on ending the influence of rogue militias has our full support," Norland said.

The U.N. special envoy to Libya Jan Kubis also urged a "full, rapid, and transparent investigation" into the incident, saying it had aimed at "derailing the political process and other efforts in support of Libya and its people."

He said the attack has also showed "how important it is to keep all the arms only in the hands of the legitimate authorities."

Oil-rich Libya was plunged into chaos after a 2011 NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi. The country has been divided between two governments, one in the east and another in the west, each backed by a vast array of militias as well as foreign powers.

Earlier this month, an UN-picked body comprised of Libyans from both sides appointed an interim government—a three-member Presidential Council and a prime minister—to lead the country through elections, scheduled for Dec. 24.

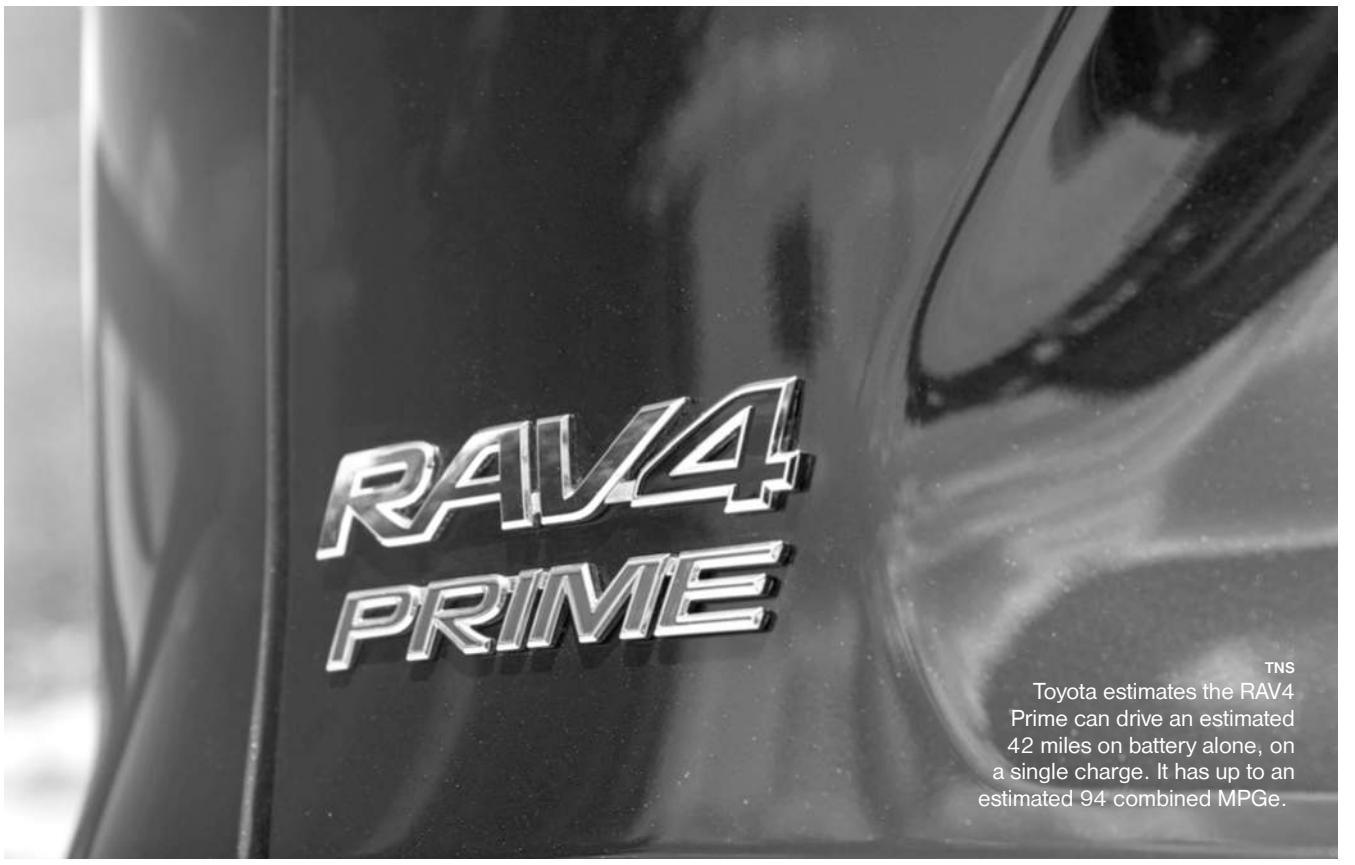
The newly appointed government, which has yet to resume its powers, called for judicial authorities to reveal the circumstances of the incident and bring those responsible before justice.

Bashagha was a contender for the post of prime minister, in the end Abdul Hamid Mohammed Dbeibah was chosen to lead the transitional Cabinet.

The forum also picked Mohammad Younes Menfi, a Libyan diplomat from the country's east, to lead the Presidential Council.

Overdrive

By LARRY PRINTZ
Tribune News Service
(TNS)



TNS
Toyota estimates the RAV4 Prime can drive an estimated 42 miles on battery alone, on a single charge. It has up to an estimated 94 combined MPGe.

AUTO REVIEW

For 2021, Toyota's second-fastest car is a hybrid crossover SUV

Life has changed in so many ways. We no longer think it's strange when someone wears a face mask, once common only among bank robbers and surgeons. We've become accustomed to it, just like we've gotten in the habit of buying more things online, even groceries. It's not merely a matter of avoiding Covid-19; it's also mighty convenient, proving that there isn't an ill wind that doesn't blow some good.

But life is like that. Change happens quickly, and we scarcely remember what came before, especially when change makes life easier.

It's why most consumers prefer vehicles like the 2021 Toyota RAV4 Prime to a sports car. OK, one is far more practical than the other, and for most of us that's what matters. But there's a second reason, and it's told by one number: 5.8. That's the RAV4 Prime's 0-60 mph time, in seconds, making it the second-quickest vehicle Toyota sells in the United States. Only the Supra sports car is faster. But unlike its faster sibling, the RAV4 Prime is a plug-in hybrid electric crossover SUV, one that's noticeably quicker than the standard RAV4 Hybrid, which reaches 60 mph in 7.8 seconds.

Available in sporty SE and XSE trim, the Prime runs for 42 miles solely on electricity, returning the equivalent of 94 mpg, before running in standard hybrid mode, returning 40 mpg in city driving, 36 mpg highway. This is possible thanks to Toyota's Hybrid Synergy Drive system, which pairs a 2.5-liter Atkinson-cycle four-cylinder engine with two motor-generators, along with a third rear-mounted electric motor to provide all-wheel drive and a combined 302 horsepower. When it comes time to recharge, Toyota estimates it will take 4.5 hours using a 240-volt outlet, 12 hours using a 120-volt outlet.

But the Hybrid's Lithium ion battery pack, mounted under the floor, proves beneficial in another important way: it provides the RAV4 Prime with a low center of gravity, enhancing driving stability. Given the RAV4 Prime's 4,300-lb. curb weight, you can feel it while cornering. But that weightiness isn't as apparent when you punch the throttle. That's when the electrons strut their stuff, providing this green machine with the punch to make short work of your need for speed. It's the most fun you can have in RAV4 by far.

However, once you revert to standard hybrid mode, you'll have to endure the four-cylinder gas engine, which gruffly moans and groans more than it should, like most politicians. Braking feels normal, without the abrupt regenerative grabbing typical of hybrids as they reclaim the energy produced by braking. Notably, the rear electric motor powers the rear wheels to provide traction when needed, whether it's climbing a hill or traversing a slippery road. It also comes on in corners to reduce understeer. Despite some road compliance, body lean well controlled and the overall feel sportier than other RAVs. But the ride becomes prominently harsh and jittery over rough roads.

As you might expect, a host of driver-assistance safety features are standard, including a blind spot monitor, pre-collision system with pedestrian detection, radar cruise control, lane departure alert with steering assist, automatic high beam, lane tracing assist and road sign recognition. Rear cross traffic braking and parking assist with automatic braking are optional on the XSE.

All RAV4 Primes get an 8-inch touchscreen with Amazon Alexa, Android Auto and Apple CarPlay compatibility, a power liftgate, as well as a leather-wrapped steering wheel and shifter. The test vehicle, an XSE, truly lives up to the Prime name, adding synthetic leather seat surfaces, wireless smartphone charging, ambient lighting, auto-dimming rearview mirror with integrated garage door opener and a 9-inch touch-screen with navigation and a premium JBL audio system. And wait till you see the options list.

Such goodness comes at a price, with the RAV4 Prime starting at $39,220, a $10,870 premium over the base RAV4 Hybrid, and $12,150 more than a base RAV4.

But unlike a Toyota Supra, you can carry four of your friends or family members and 33.4 cubic feet of lifestyle debris. Try that in a Supra. You can't. That's why car buyers choose the RAV4 Prime over a Supra. It makes for a truly prime package, one that's hard to resist.

The 2021 RAV4 Prime triumphantly proclaims Toyota's mastery of hybrid technology, a skill built over more than two decades. And, with the addition of a bit more horsepower, a more-efficient plug-in hybrid powertrain and the RAV4's practical shape and handy size, the RAV4 Prime is just one more reason sports cars are less popular than ever.

It's a change to which most of us have become accustomed.

NUTS & BOLTS

2021 Toyota RAV4 Prime plug-in hybrid

- Base price: $38,100-$41,425
- Engine: 2.5-liter four-cylinder
- Motor: Permanent magnet synchronous
- Combined horsepower: 302
- EPA fuel economy (city/highway): 40/36 mpg
- MPGe: 94 mpg
- Electric driving range: 42 miles
- Fuel required: 87 Octane
- Length/Width/Height: 180.9/73/67.2 inches
- Ground clearance: 8.3 inches
- Cargo capacity: 33.4-63.1 cubic feet
- Towing capacity: 2,500 pounds
- Curb weight: 4,300 pounds

Motormouth: Fuel lid frozen shut?

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: My car is a 2011 Subaru Outback. During this prolonged extreme cold spell we've been having, the fuel filler lid will not open. When the lid release lever is pulled, there is no result even though there is no visible ice around the lid. Do you have any suggestion to open the lid or do I just have to wait until the weather gets warmer?

—M.G., Chicago

A: It may be a long time before it gets warm in Chicago. Try pulling the release lever while a friend attempts to pull the fuel door open. If you have no friends, wedge something that won't scratch the paint between the door and fender and then pull the release. If it opens, you may need only a new door spring. If it does not open, you may need to visit the dealer.

Q: Your column is always read on Sunday, despite fact that I am not mechanically minded. Your answers are usually in layman terms. I have a 2014 Highlander with 86,100 miles. My last oil change was mid-March, 2020 at 80,000 miles. Should I go more than 12 months between changes because it will be more than 2 months before we reach 90,000 miles?

—D.Z., Westville, Ind.

A: Although I don't encourage it, you may fudge a little when it comes to oil changes. A couple months or 10,000 is stretching it a bit so I suggest that you at least check the oil level and add some if it is low.

Q: My 2011 Honda Pilot sits most of the time and the battery slowly drains so I keep it on a battery tender. Since I live in Minnesota with its winter cold, how often should I unhook the tender and drive the car for errands and such? I change the oil regularly but during the pandemic, I'm hardly driving either of my cars. My other car, a 2019 Toyota Highlander, is used sparingly but regularly. It's the Pilot that sits.

—B.R., Eden Prairie, Minn.

A: Driving the car for short trips such as errands is probably not enough the fully charge the battery. Short trips, where the engine may not reach normal operating temperature, is considered severe operation. Engines enjoy road trips. Let the Pilot rest and drive the Highlander.

Q: My one and only car remote fob to my 2006 Cadillac STX is in a snowbank in my yard somewhere. I have ordered online and received two remote fobs that are identical to the one I lost, part numbers match, etc. I am seeing various videos on YouTube, etc., that show how I can program the two new remotes myself. Is it really that easy? I have called two different Cadillac dealers, and have gotten quite a price spread for another key, from $33 to $68. For programming the two remotes, I got price quotes from $86.44 to $153. Can a regular locksmith do this kind of programming of remotes?

—M.W., Cambridge, Minn.

A: Do not trust the simple instructions you find on the Internet. Leave this job to a dealer or locksmith. If you bought the car and have taken it to the same dealer for service, they may pair the new fob for free. If your dealer charges, a locksmith will usually charge a lot less.

Life & Style

With no crowds, Louvre gets rare chance to refurbish

PARIS (AP)—The 518-year-old Mona Lisa has seen many things in her life on a wall, but rarely this: Almost four months with no Louvre visitors.

As she stares out through bulletproof glass into the silent Salle des Etats, in what was once the world's most-visited museum, her celebrated smile could almost denote relief. A bit further on, the white marble Venus de Milo is for once free of her girdle of picture-snapping visitors.

It's uncertain when the Paris museum will reopen, after being closed on Oct. 30 in line with the French government's virus containment measures. But those lucky enough to get in benefit from a rare private look at collections covering 9,000 years of human history—with plenty of space to breathe.

That's normally sorely lacking in a museum that's blighted by its own success: Before the pandemic, staff walked out complaining they couldn't handle the overcrowding, with up to 30,000-40,000 visitors a day.

The forced closure has also granted museum officials a golden opportunity to carry out long-overdue refurbishments that were simply not possible with nearly 10 million visitors a year.

AP

Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa hangs on the wall in a deserted Louvre museum, in Paris, Thursday, Feb. 11, 2021.

Unlike the first lockdown, which brought all Louvre activities to a halt, the second has seen some 250 of the museum employees remain fully operational.

An army of curators, restorers and workers are cleaning sculptures, reordering artifacts, checking inventories, reorganizing entrances and conducting restorations, including in the Egyptian Wing and the Grande Galerie, the museum's largest hall that is being fully renovated.

"We're taking advantage of the museum's closure to carry out a number of major works, speed up maintenance operations and start repair works that are difficult to schedule when the museum is operating normally," Laurent le Guedart, the Louvre's Architectural Heritage and Gardens Director told AP from inside the Grande Galerie.

As le Guedart spoke, restorers were standing atop scaffolds taking scientific probes of the walls in preparation for a planned restoration, travelling back to the 18th century through layer after layer of paint.

Around the corner the sound of carpenters taking up floorboards was faintly audible. They were putting in the cables for a new security system.

Previously, these jobs could only be done on a Tuesday, the Louvre's only closed day in the week. Now hammers are tapping, machines drilling and brushes scrubbing to a full week schedule, slowed down only slightly by social distancing measures.

In total, ten large-scale projects that were on hold since last March are under way—and progressing fast.

This includes works in the Etruscan and Italian Halls, and the gilded Salon Carre. A major restoration of the ancient Egyptian tomb chapel of Akhethotep from 2400BC is also underway.

"When the museum reopens, everything will be perfect for its visitors—this Sleeping Beauty will have had the time to powder her nose," said Elisabeth Antoine-Konig, Artifacts Department Curator. "Visitors will be happy to see again these now well-lit rooms with polished floors and remodeled display cases."

John Travolta selling $5M oceanic mansion with 20 bedrooms

ISLESBORO, Maine (AP)—The Maine mansion that actor John Travolta shared with his late wife, actor Kelly Preston, has been put up for sale.

Travolta

The 67-year-old star of "Grease" and "Saturday Night Fever" recently listed the home on Islesboro, an island off the coast of Maine, for $5 million, according to the Portland Press Herald.

The couple bought the home in 1991 as newlyweds and turned it from a "very dark and somber" house into a bright family home for their soon-to-be-born son, Jett, according to a 1999 feature in Architectural Digest. Built in 1903, the 10,830-square-foot home has 20 bedrooms and sits on a 48-acre estate along the ocean.

Travolta told Architectural Digest that he and Preston bought the home after visiting actor Kirstie Alley at her home on the island. The couple said they had always wanted a home big enough to entertain their dozens of family members.

Preston, who had roles alongside Tom Cruise in "Jerry Maguire" and Arnold Schwarzenegger in "Twins," died last year after a two-year battle with breast cancer. She was 57. Their first son, Jett, died in 2009 after suffering a seizure at the family's vacation home in the Bahamas.

Travolta became a Hollywood star in the 1970s and was nominated for an acting Oscar for his 1977 performance in "Saturday Night Fever." He was nominated again for his role in 1994's "Pulp Fiction."

Mickey's flashy dress, glowing castle mark Disney World 50th

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Walt Disney World in Florida turns 50 in October.

To help celebrate, Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse will be wearing flashier threads and iconic structures such as the Cinderella Castle and the golf-ball-like Spaceship Earth are getting new lighting, Disney officials said Friday while unveiling the first details of how the massive theme park resort will mark its milestone anniversary.

Plans for the 18-month celebration which starts in October are being made amid one of the toughest stretches the resort the size of the city of San Francisco has faced in its nearly 50 years. Last spring, Disney World closed for two months to help stop the spread of the new coronavirus, leading to the temporary furlough of 43,000 workers.

Last fall, the company announced layoffs for 28,000 workers from its parks division in Florida and California due to limits on attendance and other pandemic-related issues. Disney officials said last November that revenue at its parks, experiences and products business fell 61% to $2.6 billion.

Before the pandemic, Disney World employed around 77,000 workers.

"If ever the world needed some pixie dust and a little extra magic from our cast, that time is now—and we hope you join us in the excitement," said Jeff Vahle, president of Walt Disney World Resort in an email to community leaders.

Greek theater director given time to respond to rape charges

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Prominent Greek actor-director Dimitris Lignadis appeared before a court in Athens on Sunday and was given until Wednesday to respond to charges of multiple rapes by an examining magistrate. He will remain jailed until then, court authorities said.

The magistrate and a prosecutor will jointly decide later whether he will be kept in jail or released pending his trial.

According to court sources, Lignadis is accused of rape by two men who were minors when the events occurred in 2010 and 2015. He has denied any wrongdoing.

Lignadis, 56, resigned on Feb. 6 as the artistic director of Greece's National Theater amid reports of his alleged behavior.

Charges of abusive behavior, sexual harassment and rape against several well-known Greek actors, directors and officials have proliferated in the past month, creating a #MeToo moment in Greece. The first to speak out was Olympic gold medalist Sofia Bekatorou, who accused an official at Greece's sailing federation of raping her in 1998.

Sunny personality turns dark in the wake of miscarriage

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I suffered a miscarriage five months ago, in the 12th week. I'm still not doing well. I have put on a facade to get by, but I'm just starting to realize how deeply this is affecting my life.

I used to be a happy, friendly person. Always a smile on my face and laughter to be shared and hugs for my loved ones. Since the miscarriage, I put on a fake smile and try to be who I once was, but I can't keep doing it. Every day there is a moment from that day or the aftermath that floods my mind. I'm angry, bitter, mad at the unfairness, and I no longer have compassion or sympathy for others.

This isn't me. I don't want to be this way. My happiness has been replaced with tears and sadness. The hopefulness is replaced by emptiness. I'm very lost, and I don't know how to get out of this funk.

I no longer want to try to get pregnant again because the fear of the physical and emotional pain of another miscarriage has me paralyzed. Any advice you might give would be greatly appreciated.

BROKEN IN MISSOURI

DEAR BROKEN: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your child. Your depression and the fear you have about another pregnancy are not unusual after a tragedy like the one you have experienced. You are grieving, and the emotions you are feeling are to be expected.

Please schedule an appointment with your OB/GYN and tell your doctor about all of these feelings, because the doctor can refer you to someone who can help you work through this. It will take time, but I assure you it is doable.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been together for close to a year now. In the beginning, we were crazy about each other and everything was great.

Our hometowns are two hours apart so, to make it work, he bought us a house right in between. It was an hour each way to our parents' houses. I thought it was the perfect compromise. But now he's telling me he isn't happy here in our new town, and he needs to sell the house and move back home.

He says he still wants to be with me and that we are going to make it work, but I can't help but be scared that this is gonna be the end of our relationship. Should I tough it out and see if we can actually make it work? Or do I call it quits and let go because maybe it is just not meant to be?

MIXED UP IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR MIXED UP: You left out one important fact in your letter to me. WHY does your boyfriend need to sell the house you share and move back home? Is he so closely tied to his parents that being an hour away is too far? Is it work-related? Is he dissatisfied with your relationship? Ask him these questions because the answers will tell you what you can expect. My advice is to let things play out a bit more before making any decision other than to put the house on the market.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I KEEP TWO MAGNUMS IN MY DESK. ONE'S A GUN, AND I KEEP IT LOADED. THE OTHER'S A BOTTLE AND IT KEEPS ME LOADED. I'M TRACER BULLET. I'M A PROFESSIONAL SNOOP.
IT'S A TOUGH JOB, BUT THEN, I'M A TOUGH GUY. SOME PEOPLE DON'T LIKE AN AUDIENCE WHEN THEY WORK. ENOUGH OF THEM HAVE TOLD ME SO WITH BLUNT INSTRUMENTS THAT I'M A PHRENOLOGIST'S DREAM COME TRUE.
SNOOPING PAYS THE BILLS, THOUGH. ESPECIALLY BILL, MY BOOKIE, AND BILL, MY PROBATION OFFICER.
SO WHEN A TALL BRUNETTE OPENED MY DOOR WITH A CASE FOR ME, MY HEART DID A FEW CALISTHENICS AND I TOOK THE JOB.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

THEY WANT TO PUBLISH MY BOOK!
I'M GETTING THE CHAMPAGNE!
OH, WE DRANK IT ON NEW YEAR'S EVE. REMEMBER?
NO. I'M GETTING THAT OLD BOTTLE IN THE BACK OF THE GARAGE FRIDGE.
ADAM. WE'VE HAD THAT SINCE OUR FIRST APARTMENT.
IT'S FINE! I GOOGLED IT. IT CAN'T KILL US.
2-23

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I'M GIVING YOU A TICKET.
YOU WERE GOING 35 BACK THERE.
SO? THE SPEED LIMIT IS FORTY!
REALLY? WELL, I STILL NEED TO GIVE YOU A TICKET OR I'LL LOOK STUPID ON MY DASH CAM.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Pow!"
5 Cave mammal
8 Farmer's place
12 Video-streaming site
13 Lawyers' org.
14 Grenoble girlfriend
15 "Frozen" snowman
16 Disinfect
18 Actress Isabel of "The Jeffersons"
20 Ravi's instrument
21 "— Little Teapot"
22 Zero-star review
23 Bitten by a bee
26 Tapas bar drink
30 Football filler
31 YMCA class
32 Massachusetts cape
33 "Evil Ways" band
36 Trademark
38 Raggedy doll
39 Calendar abbr.
40 Vermont ski town
43 Holy place
47 Deli purchase
49 Saab model
50 Level
51 — Paulo
52 Really pesters
53 Do in
54 French Mrs.
55 "— chic!"

DOWN

1 "— on first?"
2 Luau dance
3 Arkin or Alda
4 Breakfast bread
5 Iraqi port city
6 "That's not — idea"
7 Sunbather's goal
8 Going together
9 Send forth
10 Minnelli of "Cabaret"
11 Lusty look
17 "This — outrage!"
19 Texter's "Wow!"
22 Standard
23 Airline to Sweden
24 — Maria (coffee liqueur)
25 Coffee vessel
26 Hot tub
27 Sony rival
28 Charged bit
29 Toss in
31 MSNBC rival
34 Garish
35 From the top
36 Chignon
37 Take back
39 Sierra Nevada lake
40 Bygone fliers
41 Shadow
42 Draft status
43 Swindle
44 Rip
45 Desire
46 Rolling stone's lack
48 Doctrine

Solution time: 22 mins.

U	T	A	H	■	C	A	G	■	A	S	I	A
T	E	L	E	■	O	I	L	■	U	P	O	N
E	M	M	A	■	T	R	I	A	L	R	U	N
S	P	A	R	S	E	■	B	R	A	I	S	E
■	■	■	S	H	A	D	■	F	I	N	■	■
R	U	N	T	I	M	E	S	■	T	O	P	■
E	N	O	■	A	G	R	I	P	■	E	S	E
F	I	R	M	■	C	O	N	T	H	E	R	U	N
■	■	M	O	M	■	S	T	I	R	■	■	■
A	L	A	R	M	S	■	I	S	S	J	E	D
R	U	N	A	I	O	N	G	■	A	I	I	I
F	N	D	S	■	B	A	I	I	■	F	I	I
S	K	Y	S	■	S	G	T	■	Z	F	A	I

Yesterday's answer 2-23

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19			■	20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26				27	28	29
30			■	■	31			■	■	32		
33			34	35			■	36	37			
■	■	■	38			■	39			■	■	■
40	41	42			■	43				44	45	46
47					48			■	49			
50				■	51			■	52			
53				■	54			■	55			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dakota Fanning, 27; Aziz Ansari, 38; Kristin Davis, 56; Patricia Richardson, 70.

Happy Birthday: Put more time and effort into creative endeavors this year. Expand your interests, family or friendships. Learn something new, and take an interest in reconnecting with people or pastimes you miss. Push uncertainty into the background; concentrate on what excites you most. Change begins with you, so stop taking a pass and make a point to try something new. Your numbers are 7, 15, 21, 26, 38, 41, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Sink your teeth into what you can accomplish. Productivity will help ward off disagreements and make an impression on someone who counts. Refuse to give in to pressure or get involved in someone's success instead of your own. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* A unique take on an old idea will excite you. Live within your means, and when doubt sets in, know enough to step back and rethink your next move. Change is only useful if it is beneficial. Focus on using your skills efficiently. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* You'll have to stay ahead of the competition. Gather information, verify facts and use your intelligence and charm to keep the peace and bring about positive change. Avoid taking risks with your health, position or reputation. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* If you are resourceful, original and insightful, an acknowledgment will follow. Look for workable partnerships and moneymaking opportunities. Invest time and money in your interests and pursuits. Don't get angry with the messenger; go directly to the source of your concern. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Cross every "T" and dot every "I" to avoid criticism. Someone will be waiting and watching for any mistake you make. Share little with people who are unpredictable and protect your reputation, meaningful relationships and your professional position. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* A power play will pay off. Have everything in place, and be ready to roll. Look for the signs, and let your intuition lead the way. Don't share information with a peer who may not be trustworthy. Secrecy is in your best interest. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* You'll encounter turmoil at home or work if you let your emotions interfere with your responsibilities. Get your work out of the way and move on to more pleasurable tasks. Personal improvements will lift your spirits, and romance is favored. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Spend more time at home, learn something that brings you joy or make a lifestyle change that encourages better health. Walk away from bad habits, influences and extreme situations. New beginnings will be energizing. Romance and self-improvements are favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Keep an open mind, but don't believe everything you hear. Someone will take advantage of you if you let down your guard. Discipline will pay off when it comes to working and how you handle your cash. Moderation is encouraged. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Direct your attention to what's happening in your domestic life, with your family and in a meaningful relationship. Putting the zest back into your life and doing your best to adapt to inevitable changes will be your ticket to success. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Think twice before you take a risk. Live within your means; protect against illness, injury or relationships with extravagant individuals. Concentrate on personal improvement, gathering information and finding peace of mind. Turn an unexpected change into a new beginning. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Make the first move. Pick up the phone, send an email or set up a reunion with someone you miss. Quality of life depends on the decisions you make. Consider what makes you happy and content, then head in that direction. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are insightful, creative and sensitive. You are friendly and generous.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9	3			7			1
1			4			9		6
	4						2	8
			2				7	
5								9
	2				8			
9	7						6	
3		1			2			7
8			7			5	4	

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/23

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

3	6	5	4	7	1	9	8	2
2	4	8	9	3	5	1	6	7
1	9	7	2	6	8	3	4	5
4	7	3	8	1	2	6	5	9
9	5	1	7	4	6	2	3	8
6	8	2	3	5	9	4	7	1
7	2	6	1	8	4	5	9	3
5	3	9	6	2	7	8	1	4
8	1	4	5	9	3	7	2	6

Difficulty Level ★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

FISH AND CHIPS — Solution: 6 letters

I	V	T	B	T	A	R	T	L	A	Ⓢ	Ⓑ	Ⓤ	Ⓟ	E
S	K	I	E	A	U	W	A	L	S	E	L	O	C	K
E	N	O	N	N	T	O	L	E	M	O	N	U	L	E
K	E	O	H	E	G	T	R	E	E	B	A	I	N	T
A	F	P	G	S	G	L	E	T	A	S	M	I	C	C
L	R	I	I	A	I	A	A	R	T	A	A	S	O	H
F	E	C	S	C	W	D	R	N	Y	R	R	E	O	U
L	N	K	L	T	E	A	A	O	D	E	A	D	K	P
A	C	L	I	L	M	R	N	R	D	T	R	I	C	T
T	H	E	O	U	U	N	E	N	E	G	G	S	O	U
H	F	S	N	A	A	P	U	S	A	S	A	B	D	B
E	R	D	T	I	P	O	S	S	H	A	R	K	D	I
A	I	S	S	E	L	U	S	N	O	I	N	O	A	L
D	E	E	P	F	R	I	E	D	I	N	E	R	H	A
R	S	G	N	I	L	R	E	G	N	I	F	I	S	H

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Barramundi, Basa, Batter, Beer, Coleslaw, Cook, Deep-fried, Diner, Drain, Eggs, England, Fingerlings, Fish, Flakes, Flathead, Flounder, French Fries, Haddock, Halibut, Hoki, Horseradish, Ketchup, Lemon, Mayonnaise, Milk, Oils, Onions, Pepper, Pickles, Pubs, Recipe, Restaurants, Russet, Salt, Sauce, Shark, Sides, Sole, Trout, Vinegar, Wagons

Yesterday's Answer: Working Out

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 45 through 62 order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Pelicans rally from 24 down, top Celtics in OT

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Brandon Ingram and Zion Williamson took what they hope will be meaningful steps in turning the New Orleans Pelicans' season around, combining decisively to produce pivotal plays during a memorable comeback.

Ingram highlighted a 33-point performance by hitting a go-ahead 3-pointer with 33.3 seconds left in overtime, and New Orleans held on for 120-115 victory over the Boston Celtics on Sunday after rallying from 24 points down in the third quarter.

"Today was a day of encouragement," Ingram said. "We just stayed together and everybody did things that they do well."

Zion Williamson scored 24 of his 28 points after halftime and had 10 rebounds, four assists and a block for the Pelicans, who narrowly avoided losing for the sixth time in seven games. Josh Hart, who was instrumental in the comeback, had 17 points, 10 rebounds, three blocks and a steal.

"We stayed true to who we were. We rallied back," Williamson said. "Everybody—coaches, players, ball boys—everybody was just engaged."

Jayson Tatum had 32 points and nine rebounds, and Jaylen Brown scored 25 for the Celtics, who appeared to be cruising to their third victory in four games when Tristan Thompson's free throws gave Boston a 79-55 lead in the middle of the third quarter.

AP
New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson (1) goes to the basket in the first half of an NBA game against the Boston Celtics in New Orleans, Sunday, Feb. 21, 2021.

"We kind of got away from what got us the lead, not moving the ball, guarding, and they stormed back," Brown said. "This one definitely hurts. It's tough. Just a tough loss — a game we 100 percent should have won."

Added Tatum, "If we want to be a really good team, we've got to put teams away early, especially being up 20-some points."

The Pelicans finished the third period on a 19-8 run, capped by Williamson's layup after he drove nearly the length of the court to score with less than 2 seconds on the clock.

The momentum carried into the fourth.

Nets 112, Clippers 108

In Los Angeles, James Harden scored 37 points and Brooklyn held off the Clippers for its season-best sixth victory in a row.

The Nets wrapped up a 5-0 trip, beating Golden State, Sacramento, Phoenix, and both Los Angeles teams to complete their longest undefeated single trip in franchise history. All but two of the wins were by double digits. They've now defeated West teams eight straight times.

Harden just missed a triple double, finishing with 11 rebounds and seven assists. Kyrie Irving added 28 points and eight assists.

Paul George led the Clippers with 34 points. Kawhi Leonard had 29 points on 9-of-19 shooting.

Knicks 103, Timberwolves 99

In New York, Tom Thibodeau's first game against his former team turned out to be the last one for Ryan Saunders.

Julius Randle had 25 points and 14 rebounds, and the New York Knicks recovered after blowing a 21-point lead to pull out a victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves, who fired Saunders afterward.

Randle made the go-ahead free throw with 32 seconds left and the Knicks held on in a game that seemed fully in their control when they lead 86-65 late in the third quarter.

But Karl-Anthony Towns had a big fourth, finishing with 27 points and 15 rebounds.

Magic 105, Pistons 96

In Orlando, Nikola Vucevic had 37 points and 11 rebounds, Evan Fournier added a season-high 29 points and the Magic beat Detroit.

The Magic have won three in a row, their longest streak since opening the season 4-0. The teams will play again in Orlando on Tuesday night.

Jerami Grant had 24 points for Detroit. Last in the Eastern Conference, the Pistons have lost three straight and eight of 11.

Hawks 123, Nuggets 115

In Atlanta, Trae Young had 35 points and 15 assists, Clint Capela added 22 points and 10 rebounds and the Nuggets beat Denver.

The Hawks had lost five of six and eight of 10. The Nuggets have lost six of seven on the road.

Jamal Murray, coming off a career-high 50 points Friday NIGHT at Cleveland, led Denver with 30. Nikola Jokic, Will Barton and Monte Morris each scored 15 points.

Raptors 110, 76ers 103

In Tampa Bay, Pascal Siakam and Fred VanVleet each had 23 points and Toronto beat Philadelphia for its fourth straight victory.

Chris Boucher scored 11 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter for Toronto, hitting three 3-pointers as the Raptors opened the period on a 15-8 surge to take the lead for good.

Joel Embiid, coming off a 50-point game against Chicago on Friday night, had 25 points and 17 rebounds for the 76ers. Ben Simmons led Philadelphia with 28 points and had nine rebounds.

Thunder 117, Cavaliers 101

In Cleveland, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 31 points and nine assists and Oklahoma City handed the Cavaliers their 10th consecutive loss.

Al Horford had 16 points and eight rebounds, and Hamidou Diallo scored 15 points to help the Thunder snap a five-game road losing streak and three-game overall skid.

Collin Sexton scored 27 points for Cleveland.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	20	11	.645	0.0
Brooklyn	20	12	.625	0.5
Toronto	16	15	.516	4.0
Boston	15	15	.500	4.5
New York	15	16	.484	5.0
Central				
Milwaukee	18	13	.581	0.0
Indiana	15	14	.517	2.0
Chicago	13	16	.448	4.0
Cleveland	10	21	.323	8.0
Detroit	8	22	.267	9.5
Southeast				
Charlotte	14	15	.483	0.0
Miami	13	17	.433	1.5
Atlanta	13	17	.433	1.5
Orlando	13	18	.419	2.0
Washington	10	17	.370	3.0

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific	W	L	PCT	GB
LA Lakers	22	9	.710	0.0
LA Clippers	22	10	.688	0.5
Phoenix	19	10	.655	2.0
Golden State	16	15	.516	6.0
Sacramento	12	18	.400	9.5
Southwest				
San Antonio	16	11	.593	0.0
Memphis	13	13	.500	2.5
Dallas	13	15	.464	3.5
New Orleans	13	17	.433	4.5
Houston	11	17	.393	5.5
Northwest				
Utah	24	6	.800	0.0
Portland	18	11	.621	5.5
Denver	16	14	.533	8.0
Oklahoma City	12	18	.400	12.0
Minnesota	7	24	.226	17.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

QB Mariota may be cut rather than traded

NEVADA— With so many teams searching for a new quarterback, rumors have swirled surrounding Las Vegas Raiders backup quarterback Marcus Mariota.

The former Oregon quarterback performed well in his lone significant action from last season and could likely start for a few NFL franchises this upcoming season, but Las Vegas is not one of them. The Raiders have turned away offers for starting quarterback Derek Carr and plan to stick by the Fresno State product.

But will Las Vegas trade Mariota? They will certainly try, but his contract makes it more plausible he just gets cut instead. Here's why.

Last offseason, Mariota agreed to a two-year, $17.6 million deal with Las Vegas that had a first-year guarantee of $7.5 million with some incentives for playing time.

Per the details of his contract, Mariota's cap number will be just above $10.7 million in 2021. That's an expensive rate for a backup quarterback, but his salary will nearly double if he reaches certain incentives. Should Mariota play over 60 percent of snaps in 12 games next season, the quarterback will earn an additional $7.85 million. Then for each victory Mariota leads his team to, he will earn an extra $156,250 with maximum win earnings of $1.8 million. Then, the incentives continue if Mariota makes the postseason. The 27-year-old will earn $250,000 for every postseason win, $1 million for making the Super Bowl, and $2 million for winning the title.

With Mariota being a below-average NFL starter, the appeal to having him as your quarterback would be paying a lower price tag to surround him with better talent. That goes out the window if you make him the starter on his current contract.

Should he play in 60% of snaps next season, Mariota's salary would have been the 18th highest-paid player at his position last season at $18.55 million. While possible Mariota could be the 18th-best quarterback in the NFL next season, it seems unlikely.

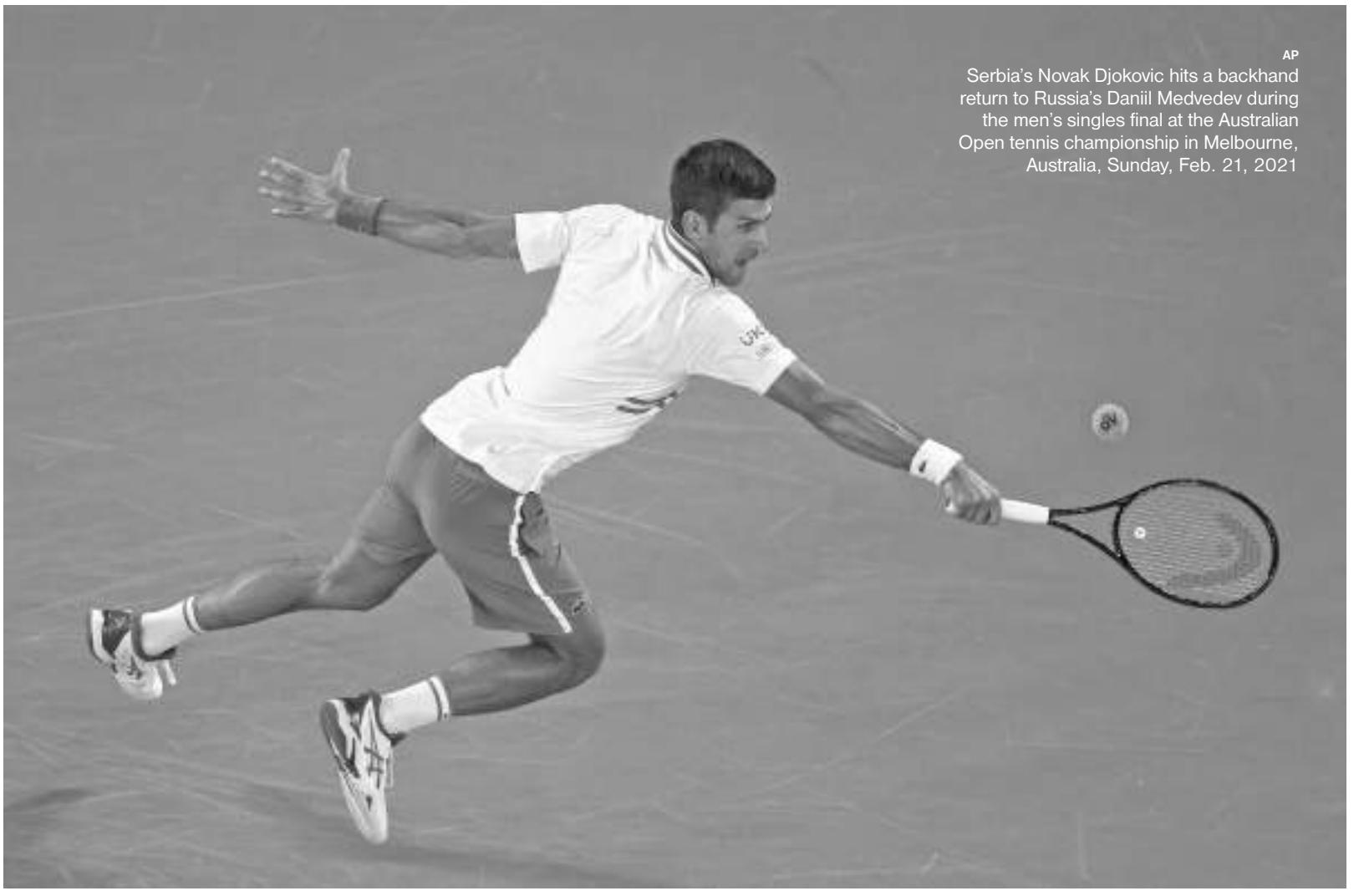
Then, the Raiders are in need of cap space to make a run at the AFC postseason in 2021. Jon Gruden is entering his fourth season as Raiders head coach and will want to compete sooner than later. That will involve using cap space to sign veterans that will help Las vegas win games immediately.

Cutting Mariota would give the Raiders $10.7 million of extra cap space if cut by June 1st. That's enough to get a solid defensive starter, at least. Don't forget due to the lower cap this season, players expect to take shorter, cheaper one-year deals to get back on the market in 2022.

"The more work you do on the player, it kind of leads you to where it's gonna go," Mike Lombardi said on the Pat McAfee Show. "You just basically know that the Raiders basically have to cut this kid because they can't carry $10 million."

Expect him on the open market sooner than later. ***(NBC)***

Djokovic right to focus on Federer, Nadal



AP
Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a backhand return to Russia's Daniil Medvedev during the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Feb. 21, 2021

MELBOURNE (AP)—It didn't take long for Novak Djokovic to make his intentions clear: All that matters to him from here on out is catching Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in the Grand Slam standings.

Forget about winning other, run-of-the-mill tournaments or playing enough to retain the No. 1 ranking.

There is one, primary goal for the 33-year-old from Serbia. He wants to keep adding to his 18 major championships—he reached that number with No. 9 at the Australian Open on Sunday —until he no longer trails Federer and Nadal, who share the men's record of 20.

"They've made history already. They made a tremendous mark in our sport," Djokovic said. "Whether I think about winning more Slams and breaking records? Of course, I do. And most of my attention and my energy from this day forward, until I retire from tennis, is going to be directed (at) majors, trying to win more major trophies."

Which is perfectly fine. There is no need for pretense.

And there is absolutely no requirement that he show up to compete more often than he really wants or in places other than where he really wants. If all that matters to Djokovic from a tennis standpoint is accumulating Slams, and playing less frequently will also protect his body — he had surgery on his right elbow three years ago; his 2021 Australian Open nearly was derailed by what he said was a torn abdominal muscle—that is his prerogative.

It isn't much different from what Federer himself or 23-time major champion Serena Williams, for that matter, have done for years.

"I think 99.9% of players—kids that get a racket in their hands— start dreaming about what they want to achieve. It's a Grand Slam, winning a major," Djokovic explained after his commanding performance in a 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Daniil Medvedev in the final at Melbourne Park.

"I mean, I don't feel like I'm old or tired or anything like that," he said. "But I know that biologically and realistically, things are different than they were 10 years ago for me."

Connected to that: His latest triumph at the Australian Open came with the additional bonus of assuring a stay atop the ATP rankings until at least March 8.

That is when he will reach 311 weeks at No. 1 for his career, one more than Federer's total, another aim Djokovic made clear mattered to him.

"When you are going for No. 1 rankings, you kind of have to be playing the entire season, and you have to be playing well; you have to play all the tournaments. My goals will adapt and will shift a little bit, which means that I will have to adjust, also, my calendar," Djokovic said. "Not have to, but I will have an opportunity to do that, which, as a father and a husband, I'm really looking forward to."

One part of the calculus is that no one knows, of course, whether Federer, who hasn't played in more than a year after two knee operations and turns 40 in August, or Nadal, 34, will win more majors—or how many more.

It bears repeating that until Federer, Nadal and Djokovic came along, no man had won more than Pete Sampras' 14 Grand Slam titles. Here we are, less than 20 years after Sampras retired, and he's been surpassed by a trio of men, and by a lot of majors.

"We're talking about some Cyborgs of tennis, in a good way," Medvedev said, referring to the longevity and unprecedented success of the guys known as the Big Three. "They're just unbelievable."

Djokovic's coach, 2001 Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic, predicted Nadal will claim "one more, maybe two" championships at the French Open, where he collected a 13th last October.

That is the only instance of a man owning more singles titles from one major than Djokovic's haul in Australia. Federer's high is eight at Wimbledon.

All have career Grand Slams.

"Roger and Rafa inspire me. That's something that I've said before. I'll say it again. I mean, I think as long as they go, I'll go," Djokovic said. "In a way, it's like a race (of) who plays tennis more, I guess, and who wins more. It's a competition between us in all areas. But I think that's the very reason why we are who we are, because we do drive each other, we motivate each other, we push each other to the limit."

Meanwhile, Medvedev showered Djokovic with praise after losing to him in the Australian Open final, even telling the story of a joint practice session a half-dozen years ago or so in Monte Carlo, where both have homes.

Back then, Djokovic already had been ranked No. 1 and was accumulating Grand Slam titles; Medvedev had yet to crack the Top 300.

"He was late," Medvedev joked Sunday. "That's the only bad thing I remember — that he was late."

Otherwise, the point of Medvedev's story was how friendly and unassuming Djokovic was to a nobody. Much nicer, it turned out, than Djokovic was in Rod Laver Arena on Sunday, when he dominated Medvedev.

"He was super nice to me," Medvedev recalled.

"I thought, 'OK, he's not going to speak to me' or something, because the guy was a god for me," Medvedev said. "Because I was shy, I didn't speak. He was asking the questions, talking to me like a friend. I was really surprised."

Medvedev said that and other positive interactions with Djokovic "helped me a lot, I would say, for my confidence in my career."

The 25-year-old Russian, who is 8 years younger than Djokovic, is now a two-time major finalist and will be ranked No. 3 on Monday. But Medvedev is still chasing that elusive Grand Slam title —he also lost in a final Nadal at the 2019 U.S. Open.

Medvedev is not used to being beaten on a tennis court lately. Nearly four months and 20 matches went by since he was on the wrong end of a scoreline. He also had compiled a dozen wins in a row against Top 10 opponents.

But none of those contests came against Djokovic in the Australian Open final. That's a whole different challenge: The 33-year-old from Serbia is 9-0 in title matches in Melbourne.

Tiger not sure if back will be ready for Masters return

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tiger Woods says he's doesn't know when he will return from a fifth back surgery, and he could not give a definitive answer Sunday when asked if he would be at the Masters.

"God, I hope so," Woods on the CBS broadcast of the Genesis Invitational.

Woods, at Riviera to hand out the trophy as the tournament host, had a microdiscectomy Dec. 23. It was the fifth surgery on his back, and the first since a procedure to fuse his lower spine in April 2017.

"I'm feeling fine," Woods said. "I'm a little bit stiff. I have one more MRI scheduled so that we'll see if the annulus (fibrosus) is scarred over finally and see if I can start doing more activities. But still in the gym, still doing the mundane stuff that you have to do for rehab, the little things before I can start gravitating towards something a little more."

Woods has not played since he joined 11-year-old Charlie at the PNC Challenge a few days before his surgery.

"I don't know what the plan is," he said when asked if he would try to play before the Masters.

The next four events are in Florida, including The Players Championship. The latest Woods like would play, if he's fit for the Masters, would be the Dell Match Play two weeks before Augusta National.

Meanwhile, the dream of winning at Riviera felt too good to be true for Max Homa, and it nearly was.

Needing a birdie on the 18th hole Sunday to win the Genesis Invitational, he hit sand wedge to a back pin that settled 3 feet away, setting up the storybook finish for a guy who grew up 30 miles away and has been watching this tournament his whole life.

And then he missed.

His ball next to the base of a tree left of the 10th green on the first playoff hole, Homa hooded a gap wedge with enough top spin to scoot up the Kikuyu grass and onto the edge of the green, setting up par. Tony Finau missed a 7-footer, and Homa was happy just to get to the next hole.

Homa won on the second extra hole when Finau failed to save par from a bunker, missing a 10-foot putt.

The message from tournament host Woods at the trophy presentation: Way to hang in there.

Did he ever.

"I don't know if I could ever do anything cooler in golf than this," said Homa, who closed with a 5-under 66 and played his final 26 holes at Riviera without a bogey. "Tiger Woods is handing us a trophy—that's a pretty crazy thought. We grew up idolizing him, idolizing Riviera Country Club, idolizing the golf tournament. To get it done, it's almost shocking.

"It feels like it just can't be topped for me."

It was more heartache for Finau, who now has 10 runner-up finishes worldwide since winning the Puerto Rico Open five years ago. He closed with a 7-under 64, the best score of the final round. He had a 7-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole for the win and left it on the low side. He watched someone celebrate again. And he kept his chin up.

"It's bittersweet to be in this position again," Finau said.

Bloom: Red Sox have talent to bounce back

FLORIDA (AP)—One by one, the Boston Red Sox have arrived at spring training spouting the same, stubborn message.

From Eduardo Rodriguez—"Don't sleep on us"—to Chris Sale's—"We plan on going and making some noise"—there is optimism at the team's complex despite the 24-36 record in the pandemic-shortened season that left them last in the AL East.

"2020 did not go the way anybody wanted," said Chief Baseball Officer Chaim Bloom, who in his first year traded 2018 AL MVP Mookie Betts, hired and fired a manager, and dealt with the COVID-19 outbreak.

"I don't want the stain of last year to have people look past the talent that we have," Bloom said in a Zoom call with reporters on Sunday. "This is a time for hope, for renewal. ... I know that we have just been through a long, cold winter. But it's important for us to take the time to take a breath, feel lucky that we get to do this and see all the possibilities."

AP

In this undated photo, Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Chris Sale throws during spring training baseball camp in Florida.

Three days of pitcher and catcher workouts can't erase everything that went wrong in 2020. But Bloom said that—so far—everything has gone well this year, especially in comparison to last spring.

"The more uneventful, the better," he said.

After playing only 60 games last year, preparing for a full season again has introduced uncertainty to spring training. Among the questions: How best to prepare pitchers for a full load a year after they made no more than a dozen starts and threw less than 65 innings.

"Anybody who thinks they can tell you what last year means ... I don't buy it. We're all just using the best information we have, using all the information we have," Bloom said. "There's going to be some art to this, it's not just science."

Rodriguez, who missed all of 2020 due to a heart problem that stemmed from his coronavirus infection, has already thrown one bullpen session and is a "full go" to proceed. Sale's recovery from Tommy John surgery is on schedule, presumably for a midseason return.

The Red Sox are also optimistic that a more normal season will allow third baseman Rafael Devers to snap out of the defensive struggles that had him leading the majors with 14 errors in 57 games. And manager Alex Cora is betting—$5, in fact—that three-time All-Star J.D. Martinez will bounce back from the worst season of his career, when he batted just .213.

"J.D. got mad at me because I only bet one dollar a few months ago that he's going to have a better season," Cora told reporters. "I'll raise the bet to five dollars that he'll have a better season."

After finishing 16 games behind Tampa Bay in the 60-game season—and nine in back of the wildcard Yankees—the Red Sox would need everything to go right to make a run at the playoffs. Bloom said that a World Series title remains the goal, but allowed that the season could be a success if he sees progress toward building a long-term contender.

"I would love to get to the end of this year and be able to look and see that next core that is going to be the center of a sustainable championship contender, and to see that core taking shape," he said.

In other news on Sunday, Rodriguez, who tied for the AL lead with 34 starts in 2019, remains on schedule to resume his role as one of the most reliable members of the Red Sox rotation.

"We've got to make sure we take care of him," Bloom said. "He's coming off something nobody has really experienced, so we've got to be mindful of that."

SISTER

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in play to reign supreme in the boys U14 singles division.

The No. 2 seed Yu secured the division crown after pulling off an upset over No. 1 seed Wataru Kadokura last Sunday, 6-3, 6-4. Before losing to Yu, Kadokura won his first three matches, as he prevailed against Takeru Jim, 6-0, 6-0; Simon Tang, 6-2, 6-3; and Henry Choi, 6-2, 6-0. Yu also swept Choi, 6-0, 6-3, and kept his streak by beating Jim, 6-0, 6-0, and Tang, 6-2, 6-3.

In the U10 co-ed singles, which also had a round-robin format, Ryan Choi bested four other players.

Choi shut down Jin Ho Park and Anna Lee and then beat Eliza Culp, 6-2, to rule the division. Quido Jambor finished second with his 3-1 record, posting his victories against Lee, 6-1; Park, 6-0; and Culp, 6-1.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Wataru Kadokura, seen here going for a baseline return during his and Bishop Ryan Jimenez's mixed-up doubles game against Simon Tang and Sam Ryu in the White Coconut Tennis Classic at the American Memorial Park last week, finished second in the boys U14 singles event.

NMC Open Golf Tournament returns on March 20

Northern Marianas College's 16th Annual Foundation Golf Tournament, which was postponed last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be held on March 20 on the east course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

Originally scheduled in 2019, the tournament was canceled because of the impact of Super Typhoon Yutu and was rescheduled for March last year. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the tournament to be postponed again.

The tournament fee for this year's golf open is $120. Payments can be made at the NMC Cashier at the college's As Terlaje campus or at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. A registration form along with information about the tournament can be found at www.marianas.edu/2021golftournament.

There will be six separate flight categories: Championship, A, B, C, Seniors, and Ladies. There will be lots of great prizes and awards to players and sponsors. Interested players are encouraged to register early as lots are limited.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Shayne Villanueva prepares to hit the ball during the 15th NMC Foundation Golf Tournament held in 2018 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. The 16th edition of the fundraising event willl be held on March 20 on the east course of the Kagman facility.

Individuals who were registered for the golf tournament last year do not need to register again. However, those who want to update their player information can email NMC Foundation coordinator Carla Sablan at carla.sablan@marianas.edu.

The college is asking companies, organizations and individuals who are interested in sponsoring holes and/or for any in-kind or cash donation to help support the CNMI's post secondary institution. For more information on how to become a sponsor, please call 237-6780. ***(PR)***

MHS

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came in last in the 500m preliminary race, but jumped to first in the finals to finish the two events with 6 points, just 2 points behind Kagman.

The Lady Ayuyus, who dominated the opening leg of the series last Feb. 13 (non-point races) timed in at 3:25.18 in the 500m preliminaries to place first and get 5 points, beating Saipan Southern High School (3:30.01/3 points) and MHS (3:31.51 (1 point). Then in the finals, MHS completed the two-lap race in 3:31.55 to top Kagman (3:32.74) and Saipan Southern (3:35.36).

Despite its runner-up finish in the finals of the 500m, Kagman remained ahead with its 8 points. However, the Lady Ayuyus eventually lost the lead when the Lady Dolphins swept the prelims and finals of the 1,000m race.

MHS clocked in at 7:00.35 in the 1,000m prelims against the 7:25.32 of Saipan Southern and 7:27.39 of Kagman. In the finals, the Lady Dolphins posted 7:16.00 for another first place finish, while the Lady Ayuyus (7:17.19) dislodged the Lady Rays (7:26.50) in second place.

With its pair of 5 points from the two 1,000m races, MHS managed to collect 16 points after the second leg of the series. Kagman got 12 for the second spot, while Saipan Southern is at third with its 8 markers.

The series will continue this Saturday, but the third leg will be a long-distance race. The women's competition will begin at 8:30am at Kilili Beach (start and finish). Kagman, MHS, and Saipan Southern's female paddlers will navigate a 4.5-mile course that has a turnaround point between the 12 Fisherman monument and Lighthouse Chanel in Beach Road.

Meanwhile, results in the sprints events in the men's and co-ed divisions will be reported in *Saipan Tribune*'s Wednesday edition.

Pelicans rally from 24 down, top Celtics in OT

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Djokovic right to focus on Federer, Nadal

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MHS takes early lead in women's division

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Marianas High School paddlers make their way to the finish line of the 500m race at Kilili Beach during the opening leg of the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Race Series held last Feb. 13.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Marianas High School is on top of the leaderboard in the women's division of the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Series following the first point race last Saturday at Kilili Beach.

The Lady Dolphins bounced back from a slow start to edge Kagman High School in the early battle for the top spot.

MHS, which has Aleena Ada, Tianna Aldan, Xyrene Apostol, Tiara Cepeda, Margarette Dolotina, Haeven Hocog, Angela Maratas, and Mikaela Vergara on its roster,

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Sister act in Coconut Classic

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Sisters Irin and Serin Chung were victorious in the 2021 White Coconut Tennis, as they clinched the singles titles in their respective divisions last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Irin Chung, left, hits the ball during her girls U14 singles game against Anna Kwon in the 2021 White Coconut Tennis Classic at the American Memorial Park tennis courts last week, while her sister Serin, is seen here going for a backhand return during an earlier tournament in 2019.

Irin was the first to be crowned champion when she ruled the girls U14 singles division following a 6-4, 6-3 win over Hoo Wang. The victory over Wang gave Irin a 3-0 record in the round-robin competition. The younger Chung's two other wins were against Savita Sikkel, 7-6 (5), 3-6, 10-3, and Anna Kwon, 6-2, 7-5.

Wang also prevailed over Kwon, 6-1, 7-6 (3), and Sikkel, 7-5, 6-1, to settle for the runer-up honors. Sikkel finished third, as she downed Kwon last Saturday, 6-2, 7-5.

A few hours after Irin notched the girls U14 singles crown, her older sister, Serin had the same achievement after topping the women's singles division.

Serin recorded a come-from-behind victory in the women's singles finals, as she lost the opening set of her title game against Hye Jin Elliot, 2-6. No. 1 seed Serin foiled Elliot's bid for an upset after taking the second set, 6-2, and completed the comeback win following a 10-6 triumph in the super-tiebreaker third set.

Serin reached the finals after eliminating Elizabeth Culp, 6-2, 6-2, while Elliot followed suit, thanks to the lopsided victory over Grace Choi, 6-0, 6-0. Culp joined Serin and Elliot in the Top 3 after a walkover win against Choi.

Meanwhile, Hannah Chae swept her way to a title victory in the girls U12 singles division.

No. 2 Chae made short work of the unseeded Isa Nishitani in the finals, 6-1, 6-0, to rule the six-player field.

Chae never lost a single set en route to clinching the division championship, as she also needed only two sets to beat Anne Lee in the semifinals, 6-2, 6-2. Nishitani took two sets, too to stun No. 1 seed Lina Tsukagoshi, 6-3, 6-3, in the other semis pairing. Tsukagoshi ended up notching the third place honors in the division after beating Lee, 6-3, 7-5.

In other results, June Yu went unbeaten in a round-rob-

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